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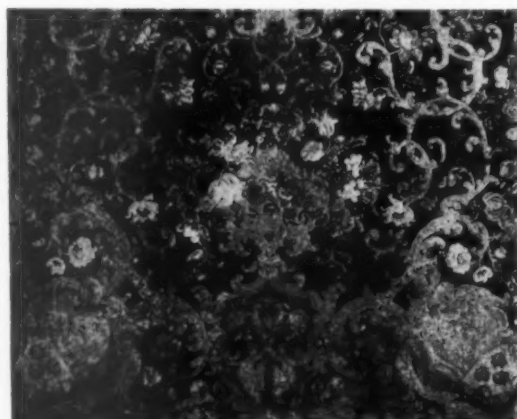
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THE WATCH-MAKER. It is not known to whom we are indebted for the invention of the ingenious and useful art of making clocks of metal, for measuring time, and striking the hours. The first clock we hear of in England was placed in the old clock tower, which formerly stood opposite to the gate of Westminster Hall, and is said to have been purchased with part of a fine of eight hundred marks, or £520, imposed upon Randolph de Hengham, chief justice of the King's Bench in 1288. Soon after this another clock, which cost no more than £30 was set up in the Cathedral of Canterbury, 1292. These most ancient of clocks were probably imported from abroad, or at least made by foreign artists. About seventy years after this, King Edward the Third, invited three clock-makers from Delft to come to England, and granted them a protection to exercise their trade in any part of the Kingdom. By these means, before the end of the XIVth century, clocks became common in our cathedrals and conventual churches. Chaucer, one of the best of our old poets, who lived at this time, compares the crowing of a cock to the church-organ for sweetness, and to a church clock for exactness, as to time. Of the astronomical clocks, one of the first was made by an abbot of St. Alban's, in the reign of Richard the Second. It represented the evolutions of the sun and moon, the fixed stars and the ebbing and flowing of the sea. When he had finished it, so deficient were we at that time in the knowledge of mechanics, that he was obliged to compose a book of directions, for managing and keeping it in order, lest it should be ruined by the ignorance of the monks. Watches were also made, or at least used, in England, not long after the beginning of the XIVth century. One, which belonged to Robert Bruce, who was King of Scotland, from 1306 to 1309, is now in the possession of His Majesty; and that which belonged to Oliver Cromwell, is still preserved in the British Museum. The King of Scotland's is not of a larger size than those which are used at this day; Oliver Cromwell's, instead of a chain, winds up with cat-gut. About a hundred years ago, Thomas Tompion

was celebrated as the best watch-maker in Europe. He was originally a farrier, and began the exemplification of his great knowledge in the equation of time, by regulating the wheels of a jack for roasting meat. He was watch-maker to Queen Mary the Second, and died November 20th, 1713. Although this business has not been known in England more than a century and a half, yet the best watches in the world are now made in London, and an immense exportation trade in this article is carried on here. (From "The Book of English Trades and Library of the Useful Arts," published in 1823.)

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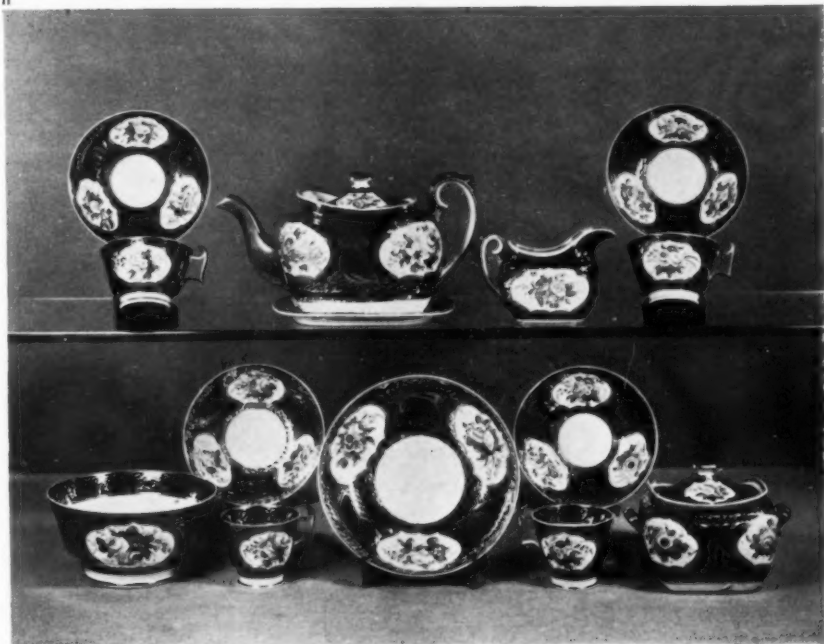
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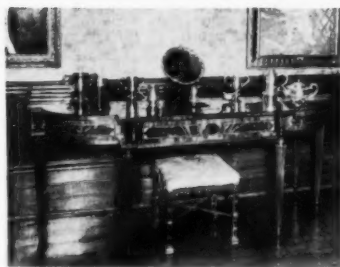
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CONTENTS

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Vol. LXII. No. 368

October, 1955

	PAGE
Current Shows and Comments. By PERSPEX	97
Alan Reynolds. By ROBERT MELVILLE	99
The D'Arenberg Vermeer Redivivus. By PROFESSOR ERIK LARSEN, Litt.D., M.A.	102
Turner and Trafalgar. By OLIVER WARNER	104
The Barbizon School. III—Dupré. By TERENCE MULLALLY	105
Reflections on Rococo. By EDWARD H. PINTO	108
A Shaft From Apollo's Bow	111
Ceramic Causerie	112
Early Meissen Kakiemon. By PERCY W. HUNT	113
Cornwall's Studio Potteries. By DENYS VAL BAKER	115
Views and News of Art in America. By PROFESSOR ERIK LARSEN, Litt.D., M.A.	118
Events in Paris	119
Robert Roussil—Canadian Sculptor. By MARJORIE SCHWARTZ (Montreal)	120
Collecting Sheffield Plate. By W. H. Hodkinson	122
The Illuminated Miniatures of Mohammed Racim. By RAYMOND LISTER	123
Correspondence	124
Book Reviews	125
Sale Room Notes and Prices. By BRICOLEUR	126

The Editor welcomes articles and photographs and correspondence on Art and Collector topics, interesting to Collectors and Art Lovers. The subjects include paintings, prints, silver, furniture, ceramics, fire-arms, miniatures, glass, pewter, jade, sculpture, etc., Occidental and Oriental. Articles should be sent to the Editor, APOLLO, 10, Vigo St., London, W.1.

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CURRENT SHOWS AND COMMENTS

NATURE INTO PICTURE

BY PERSPEX

THERE are moments when one feels that only the pioneer spirits in art have real significance. The doors which they open, and through which so many mediocrities and even good conscientious artists surge with so much clamour—and profit—are important for their opening, for the thrill of the first vistas seen beyond them. All too soon those vistas are almost blotted out by the crowd of newcomers anxious to exploit what they would not have had the genius to explore. Forgive us our disciples and leave us our loneliness, might well be the prayer of genius. Happily there is a quality in artistic originality which somehow holds it apart from the most earnest imitation. Even Cézanne is not crushed by the weight of the Cézannesque; and the two other giants of Post-Impressionist pioneering—Van Gogh and Gauguin—were so individual in their respective styles that movements stretched out from them but no man copied them.



SELF-PORTRAIT AGAINST A FLOWERED BACKGROUND. By GAUGUIN.
From the Tate Gallery Exhibition. PERSPEX's choice for the Picture of the Month.

The exhibition at the Tate Gallery of Gauguin may well vie with that of Van Gogh which stirred London a few years ago. It is again, as in recent years, the London showing of the main art event of the Edinburgh Festival; an event and a second appearance made possible by the organisation of the Arts Council, and one of the greatest services rendered by them to the art life of Britain. Here are eighty of the artist's works—paintings, engravings, and two pieces of sculpture—gathered from the most important collections in Europe and America, and revealing perfectly his whole development. The first shown is a conventional Barbizon school type of landscape painted in the first year of Gauguin's art life; the last that "Women and a White Horse" which, destitute, with failing eyesight, terribly sick, lonely and threatened by imprisonment, Gauguin did on the Marquesas a few weeks before his death. In between we watch that art absorb and pass the influences of the Impressionists, of Van Gogh, of Japanese colour-prints, and half a score others, to find itself at least in the poised primitive world of Tahiti. In style it was a movement from the appearances of Nature to the evocative image, and thus from objectivity to the subjective. But the important thing about Gauguin's art is that its subjectivity is of the spirit and not—as that of Cézanne and of so many who have followed him—of the mind. It is a tension, not an equation; a compelling pull of primitive forces in Nature, not a logical analysis of her quantities. The temptation to compare him with D. H. Lawrence is irresistible, but one has to remember how much earlier he was and how spontaneous and unintellectualised was the revolt against civilisation shared by both Gauguin and Van Gogh. The likeness to Lawrence, however, is paralleled in the sensuous quality which in both men

demanding an appealing beauty in the art created whatever other standards they challenged or violated.

The exhibition at the Tate will succeed by its charm, its sensory loveliness of surface, and that, when we remember the personal character of Gauguin, is something of a paradox. Yet at whatever point one touches his painting its sheer loveliness of colour, of design, of painting quality, attracts and holds. Whatever he hated—and there is a savage hatred in the man—he loved beauty and he loved painting, loved it for its own sake. The result is superb decoration in glowing, vivid and harmonious colour. The "Self-Portrait against a Flowered Background" painted for Van Gogh in the Pont Aven period just before Gauguin joined him at Arles in 1888 he himself inscribed "les Misérables," and included a profile of Bernard as another who suffers for art's sake rather than be "sullied by the foul kiss of the Beaux Arts." But he wrote of it:

"The drawing is of a very special kind: complete abstraction. The eyes, nose and mouth are like flowers in a Persian carpet, thus personifying also the symbolical side. The colour has nothing whatever to do with Nature—imagine something like pottery which has been subjected to too great a heat. Through all the reds and purples run streaks of flames as though a furnace were blazing before one's eyes, seat of all the painter's mental struggle."

The resultant picture, for all this passion and anger—perhaps because of it—is full of beauty and a wonderful decoration. Those words, that savage mood, that beauty when they are translated into paint, give the keynote to Gauguin and his art. The current exhibition is a memorable experience among masterpieces.

After Gauguin almost everything tends to feel rather

tame and flat. Except perhaps the show "Critic's Choice" at Arthur Tooth's. This is something new in exhibitions in that the dealer has begun a series of annual shows in each of which the choice of the artists and works to be hung is given to an individual outstanding critic. This, as it were, calling of the critical bluff by asking: "Well, what do you like?" is a fascinating if rather terrifying idea. Eric Newton is the first willing victim: an excellent choice, for Mr. Newton's judgment, experience, catholicity and knowledge command universal respect. There were, however, conditions laid down which militate somewhat against the possibility of doing more than make a gesture for the kind of art the critic prefers. First, only about twenty-seven pictures can be shown; then, three different age-groups—under 35, between 35 and 45, and over 45—must be included; and finally, three to five pictures of each artist must be shown. Faced by these strictures Mr. Newton makes a gesture, concentrates upon the non-figurative work of five artists, and, as one would expect, defends it magnificently in an important foreword to the catalogue. Graham Sutherland is the veteran; Leonard Rosoman comes nearest to Nature (and thereby to my personal choice among his chosen); Stephan Knapp and Philip Sutton come in with the kind of abstract painting which to me has only the virtue of patternmaking in paint and not very pleasing pattern at that; and Donald Hamilton Fraser has some dashing painted and exciting beachscapes and seascapes hovering between Nature and notions which accept the condition of translating things into pictures without violating the nature of either. I still believe this to be the function of art, the necessary tension of which any slackening on either side results in boredom. Abstract What-you-wills are as dull as picture-postcard realism, but much easier to turn out by the barrel-load. To me both Philip Sutton and Stephan Knapp creating these are creating nothing much. As for the art of Graham Sutherland, even when I succumb to its ingenuity I so dislike the morbidity of the horrors which seem to obsess him that I am quite simply repelled by these Heads and Hanging Forms. I dare say we may discover them when we explore the less attractive of the planets, but that is an excellent reason for staying where we are. I make a present of the conservatism implied in that statement to any one who wishes to decry my own critical judgment. On the whole, therefore, I was disappointed by the modernist narrowness of Mr. Newton's choice. More than thirty years ago, when he was very young and I was even younger, he reviewed a book of mine upon abstract art under the heading "The Grin without the Cat". Well, here we have it; but I, for one, would prefer something more purring and strokable.

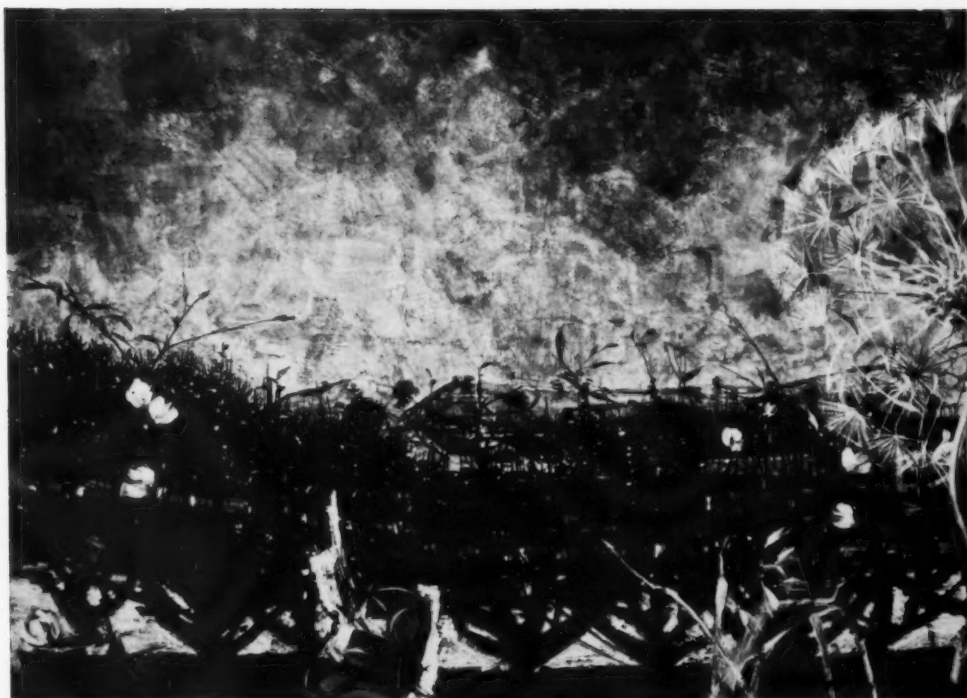
My suspicion that the cat is coming back is borne out in those two strongholds of the non-figurative, Gimpel Fils and the Hanover Gallery. In the former we have had this year's showing of the Eight Young Contemporaries selected from the "Young Contemporaries" show at the R.B.A., which annually goes talent spotting round the art schools of Britain. Once again it is a personal choice, this time a four-some by art critic Denys Sutton, collector Howard Bliss, artist L. le Broquy, and dealer Charles Gimpel. The new realism has broken in. Painters and sculptors, men and women (and the exhibition keeps a nice balance between the sexes and the arts) are clearly aware of Nature and natural appearances, although none are in danger of making a transcript of these. The sculpture of Ralph Brown, which was outstanding at the recent exhibition of new sculpture at the Institute of Contemporary Arts, is powerfully present here. It is terrifically ugly—dreadful old men and pregnant women, mitigated only by the amusingly natural "Girl with Wheel"—but there is a kind of volcanic force about the craftsmanship which gets it across. In absolute contrast is the stillness and withdrawn misery of Pamela Lloyd's "Two Girls with a Corpse" and "Two Girls with a Dead Bird". When Miss Lloyd frees herself from this elegaic mood her courageous simplicity of design and of means generally should find expression in mural painting. Over against her

stands the gay, light-toned religious painting of Tom Cross. It has not yet technically found assurance, but is full of promise if the artist will accept the discipline of his medium. At least it is something to find a young artist turning to the Christian legend for his subjects, for not the least difficulty for the contemporary artist is to choose subject-matter with some sort of universal significance.

I found myself positively repelled by that choice in another exhibition where realism was evidently the keyword, that of John Bratby at the Beaux Arts Gallery. This is the home of the British phase of this movement, and Bratby one of its foremost exponents. He has a lively linear method of painting, works on a large scale as so many of these new realists do, and is as noisy as he is individual. He, too, fights shy of beauty. Singularly unattractive women sit at tables where the week's grocery has evidently just been unpacked before the breakfast things have been cleared. Amid such domestic confusion the ladies look understandably unhappy and distraught, but no doubt it yields to John Bratby a formal significance. I would say that as design it is too restless did I not know that it is forbidden to deny licence of any kind to an artist to-day. Nevertheless I believe there is an over-insistence on the literal when an artist makes legible the labels on the cereal cartons; and Bratby is in danger of making realism overreach itself.

The exhibition of Victor Willing at the Hanover Gallery keeps a happier balance between form and content. He is evidently a disciple of Francis Bacon, though it is not easy to define the influence which one feels. His paintings are on the generous scale, which is a mark of the times, and they are in most instances figure subjects. The tonal relationship and the design create something highly satisfying as pictures; the drawing is deliberately merged within broad colour masses so that an air of mystery strangely dominates each work. Here the brooding, catastrophic personality of Mr. Bacon seems to stand behind the artist. As with Bacon's works we feel that something sinister is afoot, however innocent the surface story may be. Victor Willing leaves a foot unfinished in such a way that our subconscious suggests it might have been eaten by rats; or a Young Man plays with a kitten as the kitten itself might play with a mouse. This is almost the new romanticism rather than the new realism, and I am prepared to be told that the artist had no such overtones. However, the result is very painterly and fascinating, and this first one-man show makes one look forward to the next.

Finally, a glance back at the days when there was little question of the function or methods of art, when pictures were Nature unalloyed. At Newman's Gallery there is an exhibition of paintings of the Mexican scene during the mid-XIXth century, most of them by a Rome-trained American artist, Conrad Wise Chapman. Excellently painted and revealing both the landscape and the life of the country, they add a new name to the first rank of American landscapists, or rather underline the importance of one already there. His work has hitherto been known chiefly by some Civil War scenes in American museums, and by a panoramic sketch in the museum at Richmond, Virginia, for a lost picture. His rediscovery is due to Mr. Benzimra of Newman's, who, after buying some of these Mexican pictures at a sale, was offered by the vendor some further works which he had inherited from his grandfather. One of these, when it was cleaned, was clearly part of the missing picture, and Mr. Benzimra, inquiring whether the owner possessed any more canvases from the same source, was able to trace the important rest of this 14 ft. long Mexican landscape, which in its cleaned state is as fine as a painting as it is important as a document of the place and people of the Valley of Mexico. One hopes that it will find its rightful home in a museum back in the country which it reveals after its long exile in an English attic. Meanwhile we have at Newman's the opportunity of studying a group of finely painted works by this early American landscapist who has been almost forgotten for a century.



SPRING

ALAN REYNOLDS

By ROBERT MELVILLE

ALAN REYNOLDS, who has not yet reached the age of thirty, will shortly be holding his fifth exhibition at the Redfern Gallery. He is the only English artist to bring the large satisfactions of landscape into the galleries since Graham Sutherland gave us his visionary account of the Pembrokeshire Hills, and his experience of the natural scene

has been intense enough to become the unaffected expression of what John Cowper Powys calls "the borderland of the miraculous round everything that exists."

There never seems to have been a time when still-life or the figure could lure Reynolds away from his preoccupation with landscape. Some of the drawings he made in the



SUMMER

life class show him to be no less sensitive to the human figure than to the contours of the North Downs, but the figure has appeared in only two or three of his landscapes, where it is shadowy, de-humanized and, like those creatures on which nature has bestowed a protective colouring, not easily detected.

The orchards, the neat rows of hop-poles and the fields of corn provide the humanising element in his landscapes, but, as a painter, he is not deeply concerned with them; they appear in his paintings because he works in the Shoreham Valley, but the well-tilled field is far from being the predominant emblem of his vision.

He first went to Shoreham in search of Palmer's "Valley of Vision," and found there the kind of solitude that fosters habits of observation and contemplation; a solitude without isolation, free from human relationships, but rich in human associations. It was the same instinct that had led him to choose an art school on the outskirts of London, close to unspoilt country, for the pursuit of his studies, and when he was finally persuaded to go to the Royal College of Art he stayed there only long enough to make a thorough

same vistas, the same trees and hedgerows that entranced Palmer well over a hundred years ago. Old Shoreham has suffered no drastic changes in the intervening years, and sometimes, especially at twilight, it bears an uncanny resemblance to Palmer's earthly paradise. But Reynolds does not share Palmer's Christian sentiments or his nostalgia for a Golden Age: he was born and bred a countryman, and his response to the country-side has more affinity with that of Richard Jefferies, who was the son of a Wiltshire farmer and whose poetic and philosophical writings on nature were never caught in "the curious web of hesitating, sentiment, pathetic fallacy and wandering fancy" which Ruskin considered to be the attributes of the XIXth-century view of nature.

"I was sensitive to all things," Jefferies wrote in *The Story of My Heart*, "to the earth under, and the star-hollow round about; to the least blade of grass, to the largest oak. They seemed like exterior nerves and veins for the conveyance of feeling to me." Yet at the same time he was able to say: "There is nothing human in the whole round of nature. All nature, all the universe that we can see, is absolutely



AUTUMN

examination of the English water-colour collection at the Victoria and Albert Museum. It was not a lack of human warmth that made him wary of the gregariousness of student life in the big schools, but the competitive knowingness that it seemed to engender, and in protecting himself from the shallow brightness of group sophistication he was able to start on his career as a landscape painter with a profound awareness of the achievements of the past and a naïve certainty of great possibilities ahead. Unaware of such matters as the bankruptcy of representation and the incommunicability of the modern artist's experience, he succeeded in recording a fresh and imaginative response to the Shoreham Valley at a moment when critics were explaining that contemporary practice had destroyed the picture categories, and that there was no possibility of further contributions to landscape painting. If we are regaining confidence in the future of the most rewarding tradition in English art, it is thanks to the immense promise of his work and the evidence of his already remarkable development.

Reynolds has a deep regard for Samuel Palmer's Shoreham period, and is often aware of being captivated by the

indifferent to us, and except to us human life is of no more account than grass."

It was only after a recent re-reading of Jefferies that I began to understand why Reynolds, whose view of nature is so different from Palmer's, should have chosen to work in the same enclosed little strip of countryside, which is so prettily domesticated that it has the look of a private park.

One would have thought his sense of the uncanniness of nature would have drawn him to a more sombre region and that he would have been more likely to find his "exterior nerves and veins" in the vicinity of Stonehenge or the rock-pierced fields of Pembrokeshire. But his work argues that if there is this "absolute indifference to man" in nature it follows that nature is strange and mysterious wherever one finds it, not excluding its mildest aspects, and it seems that he has only to watch a "smiling" prospect of ripening corn and trim apple-trees to be able to say with Jefferies: "... aware of the sun overhead and the blue heaven, I feel that there is nothing between me and space. This is the verge of a gulf, and a tangent from my feet goes straight unchecked into the unknown. It is the edge of the abyss as much as

ALAN REYNOLDS

if the earth were cut away in a sheer fall of eight thousand miles to the sky beneath."

Before Reynolds' earlier work one is conscious of the inventiveness of the painter, and of an element of fantasy in his approach. He placed the darkened shapes of natural objects against a background of cloud-filled sky, and the foreground was as vaporous as the sky, as if subject to a perpetual ground-mist; the hop-poles and trees rose up from nowhere in stealthy silence, and even open vistas were bathed in the green light of forest interiors. The effect was stirring and romantic, but was achieved by means of a somewhat drastic intervention.

The four large paintings of the seasons completed a few months ago inaugurated a new period. One feels that one is more "on one's own" with these pictures, and with the remarkable series of water-colours that has followed, and his intervention has become so circumspect that one tends even to think that the sense of being on the "verge of the abyss"

surrealist horde, and sometimes a hop-pole or a sharp-pointed leaf seems about to impale a low sun.

These details, which remind us that Reynolds is probably the finest botanical draughtsman of our time, do not change much from season to season, for he has a countryman's knowledge of the hedgerows, and knows how stubbornly the strays from the fields outstay the seasons in the shade of the hedge. An ancient teasle or poppy-head, or a stalk of oats that has ripened outside the range of the combine harvester, will see the seasons through more than once, and even the delicate, airy globe of seed that succeeds the dandelion flower will sometimes witness a new spring without one whisp gone from its silvery head. Depicted in all their minute lineality, these forms seem to turn of their own accord into spectral presences, and they exemplify that sense of the double image thich is so inextricably involved in the Northern mode of beholding nature.

But Max Friedlander has remarked that "a symptom of



WINTER

arises from one's own sensibility rather than from any promptings on the part of Reynolds himself.

It is now clear that he need not ever leave the tiny Shoreham Valley in search of variety, for he has become absorbed by the spectacle of the sky, and its mutations transfigure everything below: a scene in one picture may look sullen or forlorn, but the self-same scene in another picture will seem the epitome of elation. If one were to go to Shoreham in search of his "Valley of Vision," as he himself went in search of Palmer's, one might discover a hint of it by lying down at the ragged edge of a field and peering through the grasses. It would give one at least the general viewpoint on which his compositions are based. The panorama is narrowed and flattened, and the concave sky curves vertiginously far above one's head. This viewpoint gives him the same experience of scale that Jefferies had when he saw a puff of air blowing through the branch of a pear tree: "a leaf moved and there was a star behind the leaf." His foreground details dominate the landscape like a

the fully matured vision of landscape lies in the extent of the sky and its importance for the effect of the picture," and although Reynolds is profoundly sensitive to the land the theme of his work can now almost be said to be the vastness of the sky. In his most recent water-colours the sky occupies something like three-quarters of the picture space, and he has had to consider all over again the old problem of establishing a positive relationship between earth and sky; between the palpable and the ineffable. His solution, inherent in his sense of the sky being under us as well as over us, is the exact opposite of that of Ruisdael, who regarded the sky, to quote Fromentin, as the "stable ceiling of his pictures." Reynolds gives his sky a persistent upward and outward movement. It streams up from below the horizon in light transparent colours, and, increasing in density, proceeds, so to speak, towards outer darkness; and the Shoreham Valley, so seductively detailed, becomes the segment of an opaque ball adrift in a causeless universe. This is his contribution to the English landscape tradition.

THE D'ARENBERG VERMEER REDIVIVUS

BY PROFESSOR ERIK LARSEN, *Litt.D., M.A.*

WHEN a painter's entire *œuvre* consists of scarcely two score canvases, and the artist's name is, furthermore, Jan Vermeer van Delft, it becomes quite evident that the reappearance of a picture that has not been seen for more than four decades constitutes quite an event and stirs the art world into effervescence. No wonder, therefore, that *literati* and sundry amateurs currently throng one of the Metropolitan Museum's second-floor picture galleries, where the "Portrait of a Young Girl" (Fig. 1), recently acquired by Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Wrightsman of Palm Beach and Houston, will remain on exhibit until November 1st.

The portrait, which is signed in the upper left corner: I V Meer (the I set into the V-shaped centre of the M), is painted on canvas and measures 17½ x 15½ in. It is extremely well documented, as Vermeers go. The artist died in 1675, aged 43. On May 16th, 1696, an auction took place in Amsterdam, at which 134 paintings from different masters were sold; among them, a number of canvases by our artist, that fetched only indifferent prices, but constitute, thanks to reliable catalogue descriptions, one of our main documentary sources as to the painter's *œuvre*. Under No. 38, the catalogue mentions: "A bust in antique costume, uncommonly artistic," that fetched 36 guilders. This is generally taken to be identical with the "Portrait of a Young Girl" from the Mauritshuis, The Hague, of which more later on. The description of No. 39 ran as follows: "Another Vermeer of the same type"—sold for 17 guilders—which is presumed to be our painting.

Then there is a hiatus until 1859, when the catalogue of the Duc d'Arenberg collection was published in Brussels. Its compiler happened to be Etienne-Joseph-Théophile Thoré, an émigré Frenchman, who signed the pseudonym of William Bürger to his writings and devoted twenty years of studious research to the rehabilitation of the master, finally to publish his findings in 1866, in the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*.

From that date, every scholarly monograph dealing with Vermeer carries the d'Arenberg portrait as an indisputable work, generally pointing to the evident kinship with the Hague picture and proposing a corresponding date for both. Vermeer's development is still very much of a puzzle. He became a master painter in 1653, as evidenced by the inscription in the Delft St. Luke Guild. There exist but two dated works, the first (at the Dresden Gallery) stemming from 1656. Efforts at drawing up an evolutionary curb are, therefore, purely empirical, and the outcome, as a result, quite subjective. The painter's avowed activity stretches over a period covering roughly 20 years, from 1653 to 1675; one is generally agreed in placing the best canvases toward an assumed period of maturity centring in the vicinity of 1660. Coarser or more broadly treated works are being assigned dates prior to the early 'sixties, while the more decorative compositions, or those lacking in spatial qualities, are said to originate from the end of his artistic activity.

The absence of documented *fulcra* accounts for widely divergent views. Thus, W. v. Bode placed the two girl portraits (Hague and Arenberg) immediately after 1655, A. B. de Vries about 1660, while in E. Plietzsch's opinion they belong to the mature period around 1665.

The Wrightsman Vermeer has not been on view since 1914; even modern records are all based on tradition and examination of photographic reproduction. Why did the painting disappear from the public eye for so long? The circumstances belong to the *petite histoire* and seem to be quite worth recounting. Art students will recall that the branch of the ducs d'Arenberg which owned the painting were settled in Belgium for a long time. Their holdings comprised considerable estates, aside from their world-famous art collections. Came the First World War, and the astonishing revelation that the Herzöge von Arenberg (the family was of German origin) had never bothered to become Belgian citizens at any moment of their prolonged sojourn in that country. They were therefore expelled in due course as enemy aliens, and their property seized and put under sequester. The dispersal of their art collections alone, by public

auction, lasted several weeks; and one of my fondest memories is the complete lecture course on Greek Architecture which I took in one of their *ci-devant* castles, complete with moat and drawbridge, that was allotted to Louvain University. The Vermeer canvas, however, did not show up at any of the sequester sales, and it is to be assumed that the d'Arenbergs sent it back to Germany for safe keeping, when things started to take a nasty turn for the Kaiser's armies. Now that the statute of limitations has made further prosecution by the Belgian Government illusory, the painting has found a permanent abode in the new world.

Jan Vermeer is what we currently call a controversial personality. If ever *La donna è mobile* were made to apply to fickleness in art fashion, the Delft master could lay claim to being a prime victim. Enjoying a solid reputation during his lifetime, to the point of being hailed by the contemporary poet-printer, Arnold Bon, as Holland's hope after Carel Fabritius' premature death, his name was relegated to the limbo of oblivion for a century and a half since the

already mentioned Amsterdam auction sale of 1696. For Thoré, the rediscovery of Vermeer signified primarily political combustion material. Here was a typical painter for and of the middle-class, presumably forgotten by reason of his *bourgeois* inclinations. What more was needed to set an easily inflammable exile afire, whose very pen-name, Bürger, i.e., citizen, spelled a programme? Thoré, like many an educated Frenchman, had excellent taste. He lacked, however, style, critical discernment and a sound judgment of quality. How else could he have included in his *œuvre* list works by so heterogeneous masters as De Hooch, Koedijk, C. de Man, Vrel, etc.; demonstrating thus freely that his enthusiasm was aroused by subjects rather than by the artists' characteristic and unique painterly qualities. "The Sphinx of Delft," as Bürger-Thoré dubbed the artist, being nowadays considered as the third great luminary in the glittering sky of Dutch XVIIth-century painting—on a level with Rembrandt and Frans Hals—it might sound like a legitimate question to ask what prompted his long eclipse.

The extreme scarcity of his works and their unequal quality might serve as one answer. It is quite correct that out of about 35 generally admitted paintings, only a dozen, at the utmost, appear of prime excellence and in a satisfactory state of preservation. However, other artists' names survived, albeit



PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG GIRL.

Canvas. 17½ x 15½ in.

In the collection of Mr. and Mrs. Charles B. Wrightsman of Palm Beach and Houston.

THE D'ARENBERG VERMEER REDIVIVUS

with fewer works to their credit. We should, therefore, probe for further, supplementary and deeper reasons motivating Vermeer's exclusion from the limelight that never ceased to encompass Rembrandt and Hals, although the degree of favour with which they met on the part of the public may have oscillated over the time. Whenever Vermeer's biographers, and perforce apologists, attempt to explain the essence of his genius, they are obliged to limit themselves to a description of technical achievements. The artist's *forte* lies in the rendering of details, in the jewel-like precision and consummate perfection of parts into which his compositions can be divided. To Ed. Plietzsch we owe the penetrating remark that one cannot speak of genius with respect to Vermeer, unless willing to equal "genius" with "application." Thomas Craven abounds in the same sense, and even A. B. de Vries has to admit that "... the creative impetus springs not from the vitality of the artist who seeks to incarnate ideas and events, but from the intuitive certainty that contemplation is the sole source of painting. . . ." In other words, Vermeer is a remarkable *luminist*, expert, as De Vries puts it "... at catching the play of light and shade . . ."; he is also capable of showing himself occasionally as an accomplished master of the blurred *contour*, allowing the light to play and flicker around the figures; thereby conveying a telling effect of plasticity. To these technical traits we may add the skilful use of a peculiar colour-scheme that stresses "complementaries," especially blue and yellow; and frequent avail of light backgrounds. The general impression that we retain, however, is that of a cold and distant personality.

Comparing his art to that of Rembrandt and Hals, we might perhaps here hold the reply to our initial query. Both Dutchmen captivated their respective *aficionados* by something more effective than a display of craftsmanship of mere, however commendable, manual dexterity. Who doubts that they achieved the highest degree of mastery over pictorial matter, emerged as easy victors in the perennial strife of painter versus brush and pigment—each in his very own chosen course and *manner*? But beyond the demonstration of physical virtuosity and the capacity of "putting up a good show," their works contain a distinct message for the beholder. It may have deeply spiritual connotations, as in the case of Rembrandt "... in whose faces flickers a reflection of their souls . . ."; or content itself with the swagger, the coarseness, the *paillardise* inherent to Hals' characters. The simultaneous impress, however, of the artist's conception upon the eye as well as upon the intellect, leads us to grant Hals and Rembrandt unhesitatingly the accolade of greatness, thereby consecrating the prevalence of spirit over matter. It remains to be seen whether an art that fails to radiate soul, electric excitement or vibrant emotional qualities, merely constitutes the outgrowth of, however great, a talent, or might touch ever so faintly, by its roots, upon the hidden springs of genius.

These reflections leapt to my mind while repeatedly admiring the Wrightsman Vermeer—an uncontested technical masterpiece. Standing out from a transparent dark brown background (not opaque, as one would expect from the photograph), an eerie, flimmering and luminous head of a young child surprises the onlooker. The face, which light strikes from the left, is delicately modelled with a hair brush; its shades vary from unadulterated white to warm, greyish tones. The hair is barely indicated, and set off against the thin yellowish-light grey head-dress. Around the juvenile sitter's shoulders a cloak is draped, that shimmers in the lightest, coolest blue which an artist ever succeeded in affixing to a canvas. Here, highlights are indicated

with firm strokes of a bristle brush and passages of tones are rendered with consummate mastery. The fabric lightly espouses the child's thin body and covers it in an harmonious flow. With deceptively simple means, Vermeer thus created a bewitching image, delicate yet strange, almost alien.

Seeing this canvas currently hang between the "Lady with a Lute," and the "Young Woman with a Water Jug," both so much weaker in draughtsmanship, monochrome in colouring and badly skinned, raises the question: how much of Vermeer's original art and technique is really accessible at present? The Wrightsman Vermeer is in marvellous shape, and proves quite revealing with respect to Vermeer's technique. Most of the artist's charm and means of expression reside in the glazes. The often-remarked-upon primitive-like quality of the colours stems mainly from the use of a resinous painting medium, which, like that of Rubens or the Van Eycks, gains through hardening in depth and transparency. The painter built his works up in consecutive layers, separated by means of easily soluble varnishes. Thereby, his canvases became extremely vulnerable to cleaning, and were repeatedly shorn of their glazes in the process. Hence the current coarse and dull consistency of the greater number of his works.

The reasoning applies to the kindred "Head of a Young Girl" from the Mauritshuis (Fig. II), which certain fervent admirers did not hesitate to call "La Joconde du Nord." One of the most famous among the painter's creations, it illustrates à merveille the characteristics of his palette, the famous complementaries blue-yellow, enhanced by the thin white collar-band, and the humid reds of the girl's youthful lips. Much more colourful than the former Arenberg Vermeer, where the tonalities are turned to a minor key, it is, as E. Trautscholdt correctly pointed out, reminiscent of some such prototype as Guido Reni's "Beatrice Cenci." In spite of repeated lyrical outbursts, of which the, unfortunately most poorly preserved, Hague portrait was the object, comparison cannot but stress the abyss which separates it from the transcendental spirituality of the original "Mona Lisa." Nobody can tell whether the relatively animated regard of the Hague "Young Girl" is original or added by a thoughtful restorer.

In the case of the former Arenberg portrait, however, we need not harbour such qualms, and nevertheless all authorities have remarked upon its lifelessness, emptiness of expression and even (Plietzsch) lasciviousness. It remains hard to understand why an admittedly accomplished craftsman like Vermeer should have pushed impassivity beyond all limits. A possible explanation has occurred to me, that might perhaps open new vistas on the problem.

Vermeer did not confine his interest to Dutch art alone. He was also well acquainted with Italian painting, and we even find his name mentioned in 1672 as an expert on Italian pictures. But, during his lifetime, there were other far-away countries, with which Dutch colonial expansionism had made successful contact. In 1602, already, the Dutch East Indies Company had its seat in Batavia, traded with many islands and the Asiatic continent, and thrived on the exchange of exotic products with the homeland. The public took great interest in these undertakings, as becomes clear from the lasting success that Frans Post met with his Brazilian landscapes. In Post's case, there existed no appreciable indigenous art which could have shaped his mode of expression. Therefore, he remained a Hollander painting native scenery. In the Dutch East Indies, however, and especially on Java, a highly articulate art had

(Continued on opposite page)



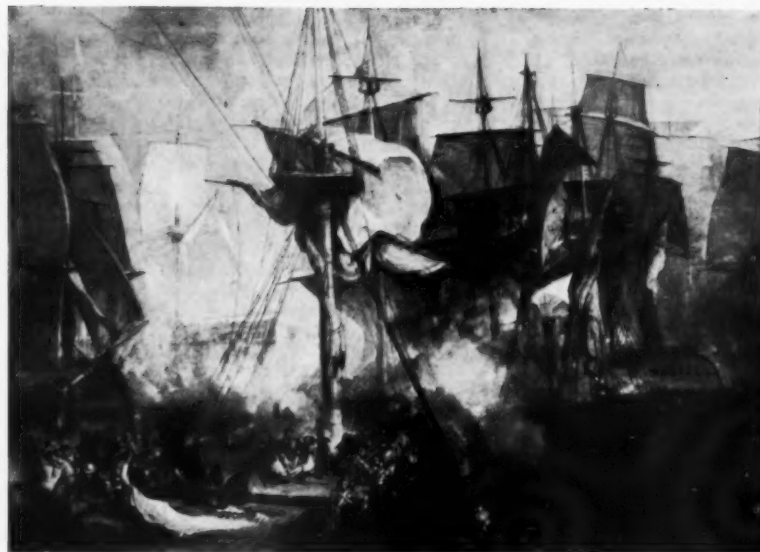
HEAD OF A YOUNG GIRL.
("La Joconde du Nord")

Mauritshuis.

TURNER and TRAFALGAR

By OLIVER WARNER

The Battle of Trafalgar, as seen from the mizzen starboard shrouds of the *Victory*.
TURNER. (By courtesy of the Tate Gallery.)



THERE is one strong thread of interest which runs through the whole prodigious life of J. M. W. Turner. It is the sea. When a young man, he delighted to match his skill against that of the younger van de Velde. Almost to the end of his days he was producing sea paintings of increasing originality.

Turner's inclination had two distinct aspects. First was the artist's delight in the sea and ships as challenging material for his brush. There was also clear pride in the Navy's achievement in the long struggle against Napoleon.

It so happened that Trafalgar, whose 150th anniversary is commemorated this year, was fought when Turner was at the height of his powers. He was then thirty, a full Academician, with a widening reputation. With his strong attraction to maritime affairs, it was natural that he should have been among the many who watched with sad attention the arrival of H.M.S. *Victory* after her voyage homeward from Gibraltar, in the December of 1805, bearing the body of Lord Nelson.

While it was left to A. W. Devis to reconstruct the more intimate scenes on board, including his well-known record of the group in the cockpit as the admiral lay dying, Turner was engaged in a less immediate project. He was busy with sketches which fill a small note-book ("Nelson") bound in a marbled paper, No. LXXXIX in the British Museum print-room.

There are over twenty pages of pencil notes both of details of the *Victory* and of members of her ship's company. Included in the note-book are some written memoranda, e.g., that Nelson "fell on his left arm" after he had been hit. There is an indication of the grouping of the men who carried him below; some notes on the uniform of the marines; and many swiftly jotted views of the ship. In the middle of the book is a rough scheme for the composition of a full-scale picture.

Turner's intention was to store his mind with impressions made at one of the most solemn moments in England's naval story. Although none equalled him in ability to convey a sense of the national achievement at sea, in point of fact his large canvas "Trafalgar," now in the National Maritime Museum, was much disapproved of by the pensioners in Greenwich Hospital for its telescoping of events in the battle. Their attitude drew a typically exaggerated retort from Ruskin that Turner's was "a picture which, at a moderate estimate, is simply worth all the rest of the Hospital—ground—walls—pictures and models put together." The tarpaulins wanted truth to fact. Turner aimed at something more grandiloquent.

He did, however, produce one Trafalgar picture which

with its blend of accuracy and drama, should have pleased most tastes. This is his careful reconstruction "The Battle of Trafalgar as seen from the Mizzen Shrouds of the *Victory*," now in the Tate Gallery, foreshadowed in the pencilled design in the "Nelson" note-book.

There are numberless versions of the same scene, good, bad and indifferent. Turner's, produced as the outcome of careful preparation, should be recalled, in considering his long career as a marine painter, as an interesting pointer in the direction of thought whose most popular expression was undoubtedly "The Fighting *Temeraire*," exhibited at the Academy in 1839. The grand old ship, which did so much at Trafalgar to support the *Victory* in her death duel with the French and Spanish, is seen in her passing, towed to the breaker's yard under the power of steam.

Turner, as always where the sea was concerned, had a strong sense of the significant. He had lived through the supreme days of the sailing Navy; he saw the storied ships pass away one by one. It is to posterity's advantage that he was able to render great events with befitting majesty.

The D'Arenberg Vermeer Redivivus (cont. from p. 103)

grown based on that of India. Monuments like that of Barabudur must have impressed art-conscious Dutchmen, and the possibility that Indonesian art works of small size, as well as detailed descriptions of major native achievements, reached the Netherlands and came to the attention of Vermeer, is not to be excluded offhand. Approached from this new angle, Vermeer's figures, and especially such portrait studies as the two young girls of The Hague and New York, respectively, reveal striking points of resemblance with the Gupta ideal, such as was transmuted by Javanese art. We have the same oval heads, crisp—like carved—eyebrows, extended ear-lobes and light, floating draperies. The faces tend toward serenity and aloof withdrawal, for did not Gautama teach that "there, where there is no attachment of any sort, there you will find the unique island: it is the one I call Nirvana."

The absence of expression in Vermeer's paintings, extremely disturbing to our Occidental mind, might perhaps find its explanation in a desire to emulate the tenderness and sweetness of oriental canons of beauty. Thence stems also, *chi lo sa*, Vermeer's colour scheme: the emphasis on lapis blue, yellow, red and green, that revert to the Ajantâ paintings; as well as his poor perspective; the tendency towards over-abundant decoration; love of elaborate detail; and lack of depth.

The aforesaid is a suggestion rather than a statement, but I think that it could develop into a promising line of investigation; radically changing, by the same token, our presumptive knowledge of the great Delft's master's metaphysical viewpoint.

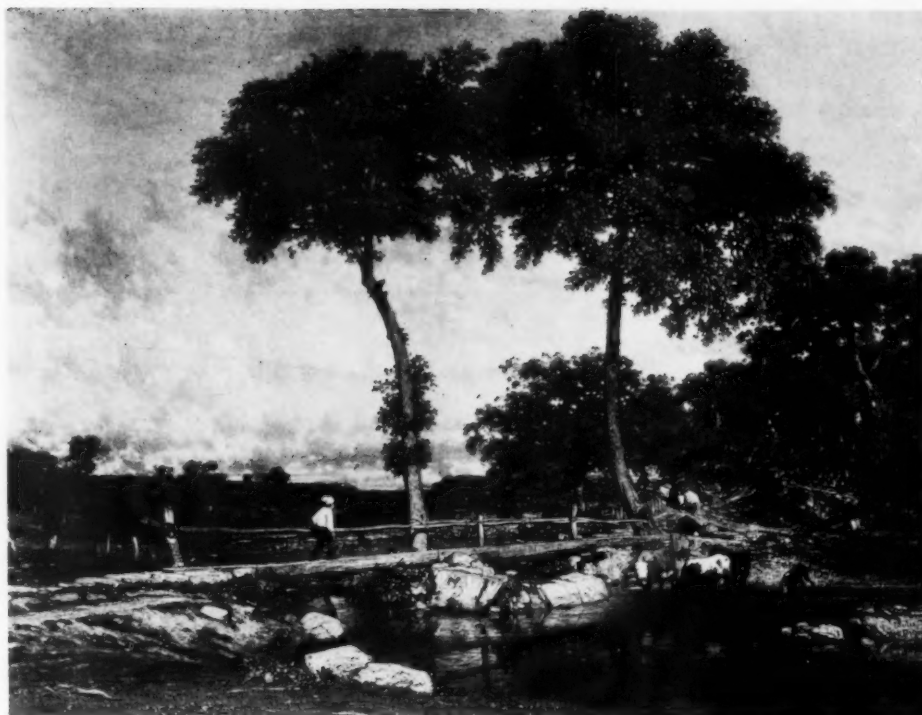
Mr. and Mrs. Wrightsman purchased the painting from the Seligman Galleries, New York.

THE BARBIZON SCHOOL

III. Dupré

By

TERENCE MULLALY



Crossing the Bridge. 1874
25 in. Courtesy the Wallace
Collection.

IT is recorded that after Dupré first entered Rousseau's studio and exclaimed: "Voilà, c'est que je cherche, c'est trouvé." Rousseau replied: "C'est Dupré que m'a appris à peindre la synthèse." And in so doing he was only paying tribute to an artist who was one of the pioneers in the development of the new attitude to landscape that became current in France in the second quarter of the XIXth-century. For apart from the merits of his own work, and its quality is very uneven, Dupré holds an important place in the history of landscape painting; he exerted a powerful influence upon his contemporaries of the Barbizon School and upon the so-called romanticists.

Dupré had a more rigid approach to nature than certain of the other Barbizon painters, and his attempts to express in landscape on the one hand the romantic, and on the other the dramatic, led him into the development of facile mannerisms. But at his best he painted landscapes of considerable power, and even his more affected pictures are decorative and highly accomplished. Yet perhaps his greatest claim to fame lies in his seascapes, for he painted some of the most impressive of marine pictures.

Jules Dupré was born at Nantes in 1811 and died at L'Isle-Adam in 1889. His father was a porcelain manufacturer at Parmain, close to L'Isle-Adam, and while still a child Jules worked under him. Then when he was twelve he was sent to an uncle in Paris, who was engaged in the same trade. Here he served his apprenticeship along with Cabat and Raffet, and learnt to paint upon porcelain. Not long after Dupré had been established in Paris his father moved to the Limousin and set up a factory at Saint-Yrieix. The boy followed his father, and it was in the Limousin that he began to paint seriously.

He was largely self-taught where landscape painting was concerned, but he was by no means a careless craftsman. Much of his work has, in fact, suffered from his undue pre-occupation with technicalities; his fondness for experimenting in the use of heavy *impasto* has led to the ruin of a number of his pictures, and his particular interest in evolving special ways of laying on his paint which would contribute to the creation of specific moods was the main factor that led him to develop his distinctive mannerisms. The most obvious of these are, first, the curious hazy, generalised effect

which is characteristic of many of his more romantic landscapes and of most of his later work, and which tends to veil the admirable design of the majority of his pictures, and secondly, the forceful use of the palette knife in his more dramatic paintings. Unfortunately, like many artists deeply concerned with the technical problems of painting, he tended to lose sight of the primary purpose of his experiments, and, having arrived at formulae which served his ends, he allowed them to become hard-and-fast mannerisms, which rob much of his work of spontaneity.

Dupré first exhibited in 1830, in an exhibition held at the Luxembourg, in aid of the wounded of the Revolution of July of that year. Then, in 1831, he had seven landscapes in the Salon. It was an important moment in the history of French art; in that year Delacroix's "Liberté sur les Barricades" was at the Salon, Rousseau exhibited for the first time, and the attitude to landscape we associate with the Barbizon School, or the School of 1830 as it is often called, was in the process of formation.

At this time Dupré was primarily influenced by Cabat and Diaz, while the scant formal training he had received had been from the mediocre animal painter Jean-Michel Diebolt. Yet Diebolt taught him little, and a more salutary and powerful influence upon his work was that of Dutch XVIIth-century painting, for, like many of his Barbizon contemporaries, he was impressed by the direct and unaffected approach to landscape of the Dutch.

But by far the most important single event in Dupré's formation as a painter was the visit he made to England at the invitation of Lord Grace. As was the case with Daubigny, he was deeply affected by what he saw of British landscape painting, and by the subtle impressions created by the vagaries of the English climate. He stayed with Lord Grace and travelled a good deal, in particular visiting the West Country and Hampshire. But, above all, he was impressed by the work of Constable, and to a lesser extent by Bonington, Crome and Turner. Their influence upon him was persuasive and lasting.

An example of the extent to which he was influenced by Constable is provided by Dupré's pleasing and well-known "Fields near Southampton." It is, incidentally, indicative of the extent to which he was recognised that although

at one time he sold one of the pictures he painted near Southampton for only 500 francs, during his lifetime it fetched 48,000 francs in a public sale. The "Fields near Southampton," while displaying many of Dupré's distinctive mannerisms, the over-worked foreground and the striking focal point created by the white horse both being characteristic of him, also provides clear evidence of the extent of Constable's influence upon him. It is difficult to realise how revolutionary for a French painter of the time was such a direct study from nature. To do so it must be regarded in the context of the conventionalised, romantic or mock classical landscapes popular in Paris in the 1830's. Like others of the Barbizon School, Dupré began as a young man to look at nature directly. Then Constable taught him to catch her fleeting impressions.

On his return to France, Dupré travelled extensively, painting in the forest of Fontainebleau around Barbizon, on the Channel coast, in the Berry, the Landes and in the Limousin. Eventually, after this travelling, he settled in L'Isle-Adam. He exhibited twenty-two pictures at the Salon between 1833 and 1839, but did not submit any work from that year until 1852. Nevertheless, he was much better treated both by the public and by the critics than the majority of the Barbizon painters, and during his lifetime his pictures were commanding high prices. His artistic influence was also considerable. Rousseau learnt from him and, among others, Auguste Boulard and his younger brother Victor were much influenced by his work. At the same time he received his share of honours. When only twenty-two he was awarded a 2nd class medal and he received another in 1867, while in 1849 he was created a chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur. Then towards the end of his life he saw his work and that of his friends become *de rigueur* in fashionable circles and enjoyed the lavish praise of certain critics. For example, Jules Claretie wrote in 1876: "Jules Dupré is to-day the most illustrious of that great school of landscape painters who assure for France a lasting and absolute superiority." But nearly thirty years before this he had already obtained official recognition, for following the upheavals of 1848 he and Rousseau received State commissions. And in the same year, following the reorganisation of the Salon, he was appointed to the Committee along with Corot, Paul Delaroche, Delacroix, Isabey,



Pâturage près de l'Oise. 24 x 29 in.

Courtesy the Hazlitt Gallery.

Meissonier, Rousseau and Horace Vernet; it is incidentally a commentary upon the times that Paul Delaroche was the President.

The year before, he had played a part in a significant, but in the event ineffectual, attempt to found a new society as a rival to the Salon, opposition to the obscurantist policy of which had been growing for several years. This movement was brought to a head when Decamps, Dupré, Meissonier and others refused to submit their work to the Salon. Heated discussion followed in the press, and as a result a *nouvelle société* was formed in April, 1847. It is interesting to note that among those associated with the new organisation were artists of as diverse tastes and talents as Daumier, Decamps, Delacroix, Dupré, Charles Jacque, Rousseau and Ary Scheffer.

Dupré's association with this endeavour is indicative of his character, for his circle of friends was very wide and he was conspicuous for his generosity. For instance, he and Rousseau were for years very close to one another, and it was entirely Rousseau's fault that they became estranged. In fact, Dupré was a selfless friend, and in the days when

The Windmill. 9½ x 16½ in.
Courtesy G. M. Lottinga, Ltd.

An excellent example of Dupré as a landscape artist "... the composition is striking and distribution of light and shade dramatic."



THE BARBIZON SCHOOL

The Open Sea. 15 x 18½ in. Courtesy
Henry A. Sutch.



"a completely convincing picture and one of Dupré's finest marine paintings."

Rousseau was completely unrecognised Dupré did much for him. For example, he frequently attempted to sell Rousseau's pictures to his own patrons, and we are told that on one occasion he spent a day tramping round Paris trying to find a buyer for one of Rousseau's pictures, and that he finally persuaded a friend to purchase it for the equivalent of £20. Furthermore, some of Rousseau's best paintings date from 1844, when he and Dupré were working together in the Landes, and from 1845, when they were together in the neighbourhood of L' Isle-Adam. Dupré was also one of the first to recognise the merits of Troyon, and the influence of his work extended far beyond his circle of friends.

The striking return to popularity in England of the Barbizon painters which is at present gaining momentum—it was graphically symbolised in July, when a Daubigny fetched 2,800 gns. in the saleroom—has as yet hardly extended to Dupré. Nevertheless a critical reassessment of his work is long overdue, for he remains the most underestimated of the major Barbizon painters.

Yet when to-day we look at Dupré's work we are conscious of his mannerisms, and a large part of it has a staid, academic look. But the originality at the time they were painted of pictures such as his Wallace Collection "Crossing the Bridge," which is dated 1838, cannot be overestimated. Furthermore, this picture is not only a typical but a very happy example of Dupré's landscapes. The two large trees, placed near the centre of the composition, the distinctive painting of the sky, the striking, somewhat haphazard highlights, in this case provided by the shirt of the man on the bridge and on the cows, are all characteristic of his work.

Another excellent example of him as a landscape painter is provided by "The Windmill." This dramatic little picture shows him at his most forceful; the composition is striking and the distribution of light and shade dramatic. It is successful, but it reminds us of his greatest failing, for in it he is straining for effect.

Dupré in his landscapes was particularly attracted by two main moods of nature: on the one hand he was drawn to the dramatic, and on the other he painted quiet, romantic, one might almost say sentimental rural scenes. Great oaks are mirrored in still pools, or cattle come down to drink from leisurely rivers, and cottages lie nestling among the trees.

There is a certain sameness about much of his work. For as time went on he developed a sort of artistic shorthand; his pictures become increasingly generalised, the small, almost finicky brush strokes typical of his early work give way to a roughness of handling that imparts to much of his later work a curiously hazy effect. In this connection it is instructive to note that he professed a great admiration for Corot. Then at the same time his distribution of highlights and colour becomes more arbitrary. In passing, it is interesting to recall that his palette was famous among his friends; Jules Claretie, referring to it, wrote: "The paste-like colours form multicoloured bosses, dull, loaded with dried *impasto*—one would take them for geographical relief maps." The critic, Émile Michel, was perceptive when he pointed out that Dupré's work declined in quality during the years he ceased to exhibit, for it was, in fact, at this time that he developed his more facile mannerisms.

Anent this it is worth noting that there have always been widely differing critical estimates of his work. Croal-Thomson could write in 1890: "Jules Dupré became a famous painter as much because he was associated with and was the bosom friend for some time of Rousseau and Millet, as because his works are always of high merit." Yet Léonce Bénédite, sometime keeper of the Luxembourg, writing in 1910, could refer to "his powerful shaping of landscape" and "the lofty unity of his canvases." The reason for such various judgments lies in considerable measure in the inequality of Dupré's work. But although less gifted than Daubigny, Diaz or Rousseau, he occasionally rose to considerable heights.

During the troubles in Paris Dupré retired for ten months to Cayeux-sur-mer, near Abbeville, and it was here that he began painting the sea, and produced some of his best work. There is, for instance, in the Glasgow Corporation Art Gallery, a picture by him entitled "The Headland," in which he has brilliantly mirrored the drama and force of a rough sea breaking. Or again, there is his "The Open Sea," a picture which depends entirely for its effect upon sea and sky. It is not only completely convincing, it is also one of the finest of marine paintings. In pictures such as these he captures much of the never-ending fascination of the sea, and on the strength of them alone he is entitled to a place in the history of XIXth-century painting.

REFLECTIONS ON ROCOCO

By EDWARD H. PINTO

THE term "mirror" was used for reflecting plates of metal in medieval times and continued in use until early in the XVIIth century. With the coming of the mercury-silvered glass the common description changed to "looking-glass," or simply "glass." Only in the XIXth century did the word mirror once again supersede looking-glass in common parlance. During the XVIIIth century both the making of glass free from distortion and the method of silvering improved steadily, but the mercurial method used was injurious to health, and it remained a very expensive procedure to obtain large plates free from flaws until the end of the XVIIIth century.

Mirror-lined walls, to provide vistas, were rare extravagances reserved for the wealthy in the late XVIIth and during most of the XVIIIth centuries. Two of the earliest of such examples in England must have been the "fine room all of looking glass, very pleasant to behold," built by Sir Samuel Morland at Vauxhall in 1667, and the back room on the ground floor of Nell Gwynne's house in St. James's Square "entirely lined with looking glass." The mirrored doors provided by Gerreitt Jensen in 1692 for the great suite at Chatsworth are another early exception.

In the early Georgian period, mirrors were classical architectural features of rooms. The frame usually consisted of a moulded architrave, with a frieze, a cornice and a pediment above and, at the foot, base scrolls resting on a base mould, sometimes with a carved apron-piece below.

In the mid-Georgian or rococo period, wall mirrors were usually considered more as decorative furnishing than as architectural decoration, although some of Chippendale's *Director* plates show them as complete compositions, which include chimney-pieces. Mirror frames came under rococo influence in England as early as 1740 and went through various phases between then and 1765, when the rococo fashion waned.

Wall mirrors were carefully sited in rooms to reflect window-light by day and candlelight at night, and they were divided into two main classes: pier glasses to go between windows, and chimney glasses to go over mantelpieces. The former were generally ovals or irregularly shaped vertical oblongs; the latter were larger and, when designed as part of the chimney-piece, very often elaborately



Fig. I. A fine quality chimney-mirror from Clyne Castle. There is little piercing of the frame because it is intended as a setting to a decorative painting, as well as a glass. *Randolph of Baldock.*

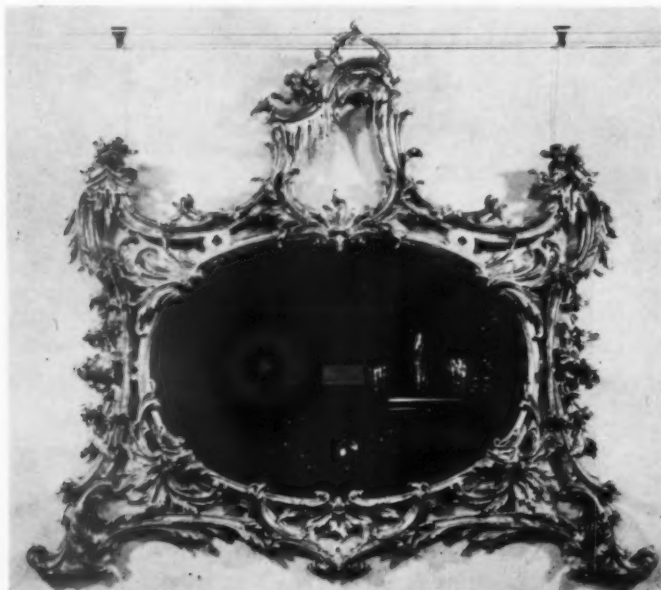


Fig. II. An elegant rococo chimney mirror with asymmetric surmount and fine scale carving and piercing. *Randolph of Baldock.*



Fig. III. A superbly carved and whimsical design for a room in the Chinese taste. Whilst the mirror frame is strikingly "Chinese," the chimney-piece is predominantly rococo. *Blairman.*

REFLECTIONS ON ROCOCO

shaped and wide-spreading at the base, to line up with the corners of the mantelshef. When designed separately, they might be higher than they were wide, as in Fig. I, or the reverse, as in Figs. II and III.

When a chimney mirror was intended to enclose a picture as well as a glass the carving of the frame was generally more restrained and less pierced than when it was not intended merely as a setting to a decorative painting. The example Fig. I, which is 6 ft. high and 5 ft. wide, came from Clyne Castle, and shows the effectiveness of this balanced technique. Although one of the basic principles of French rococo was asymmetry it was never as popular in England as in France, and although many examples of the asymmetric occur in English design books they often lose their asymmetry when translated into actual carving. The exceptions are pier glasses, which, made individually asymmetric, become symmetrical when paired up. A chimney-piece mirror which is asymmetric, such as Fig. II, is, therefore, rare,

rococo. The answer seems to have been that the furniture for such a room was usually a blend of the two, but the wall-paper was generally imported "Oriental."

It is probably no exaggeration to say that carved and gilded mirror frames were, and still are, the most important decorative feature for giving a finish to a room furnished in the rococo style. The carved and gilded scrolling create lightness and richness, and are the perfect foil to dark mahogany furniture, whilst completing the harmony with the ormolu used for its drawer handles and mounts and for other ormolu-mounted ornaments.

Because mirrors themselves were expensive items in the XVIIIth century, as fashions in frames changed there was a large trade done in the re-shaping of mirrors to be fitted into frames designed in the latest fashion. Thus, in Sir Ambrose Heal's *London Furniture Makers 1660-1840*, we find Joseph Cox, Frame Maker and Gilder, in Round Court in St. Martin's Le Grand, advertising "Old Glasses new



Fig. IV. A closely knit design of French rococo scrolls is here integrated successfully with a Chinese summer-house and a naturalistic swan. Mallett.

Fig. V. Shows how a well-proportioned composition, based entirely on crisply carved and burnished gilt rococo ornament, can look simple and dignified. Phillips of Hitchin.

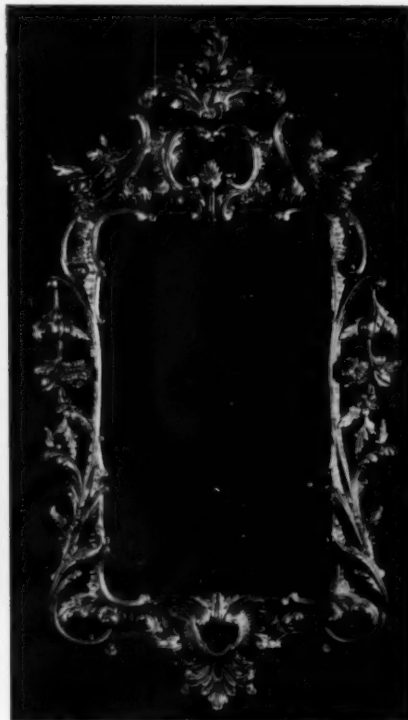


Fig. VI. A lively and harmoniously naturalistic composition of the highest quality. The asymmetry is confined to the acanthus surmount. Mallett.

and this one, with its fine detailing, depth of carving and burnished gilding, is a very fine example.

A superb and delightfully whimsical example of Chinese flavoured rococo is the chimney-piece with mirror over (Fig. III). The total height is 9 ft. 5 in. and the width 6 ft. 8 in., which makes it a small and unusually rare set for the period when it was made. Now, unfortunately, pairs of console glasses have often become separated, because they have had to be used over modern chimney-pieces which do not allow sufficient height or width for genuine period chimney mirrors. In the example illustrated, note the small brackets for Oriental porcelain or hardstone carvings, which are needed to complete the gay picture. The elements which build up this design occur in various plates in the *Director* and also bear resemblance to the frame of the trade card of William Henshan, who was at the Cabinet & Chair in St. Paul's Churchyard between 1755 and 1772. A feature of a number of designs for these sets, which is very marked here, is that whilst the overmantle is strikingly Chinese, the chimney-piece is much more pronouncedly

silvered and put into the Newest Fashion Gilt Sconces." Richard Holmes, Cabinet Maker and Glass Grinder at the Tea Chest in Barbican, states "Old Glasses, New Framed and Silvered," whilst Benjamin Rackstrow, of the "Crown and Looking Glass" in St. Martin's Lane, "Exchanges New Glasses for Old Ones," and Stephen Wood, "at the Cabinet near the Bridge foot Southwark," announces "Old Glasses mended or Alter'd." Incidentally, the illustrations in Sir Ambrose's book are interesting in stressing the importance and universality of rococo frames in every fashionable household of the period and the large part which they must have played in the business of all the best cabinet-makers, carvers and gilders of the day, for no less than seventy-six of the trade cards illustrated in this fascinating book are either framed in or include rococo frames in their designs. Admittedly, it can be argued that a rococo frame was an attractive setting for a trade card of the period, but against that it will be found that nearly all advertisers mention "glasses" amongst their wares, quite a considerable number are specialists in the making of carved and gilded frames, and

there are several references to exportation of these fashionable looking-glasses to places abroad.

The finest carved mirror frames in the rococo or Chinese tastes, or in admixture of the two, are now almost invariably described as Chippendale. Nevertheless, it is more hazardous to attribute a mirror frame to Chippendale on general stylistic grounds than it is to attribute to him almost any other article of furniture by the same reasoning. This is because there were not very many Georgian cabinet-makers manufacturing general furniture to the same standard of design and quality as did Chippendale, but there were a considerable number of London glass frame-makers, carvers and gilders in the first rank.

Whilst the upholsters and cabinet-makers in a large way of business, such as Chippendale, had their carving and gilding shops or departments, frame carving and gilding were trades entirely separate from cabinet-making. In the mid-XVIIIth century the fashionable cabinet-maker worked

Carver wets the Whiting with a Brush, then finishes his Figures, by making such flourishes in the Whiting as is agreeable to his Pattern. When he has done his Part to it, he sends it to the Gilder, who puts on the Leaf in the Manner mentioned in the Chapter of Gilders upon Wood. Neither those Frames that are finished in the Wood, nor those in the Whiting are cut out of the Solid: All Figures that rise above the Plain of the Frame are glued on; that is, suppose a Figure is to rise two Inches above the Plain of the Frame, in that Case a Piece of Wood of that Height, and of the Bulk of the Figure designed, is glued on: All such Pieces are glued upon the Frame before the Carver begins to Work; which he does with Chissel and Mallet, but uses a Number of Instruments of different Figures and Bulk.

"The Youth designed for this Branch of the Carving Business ought to have a good Invention to find out new Patterns, and ought to be early taught Drawing; without which it is impossible for him to succeed in his Business.



Fig. VII. A felicitous example of a slight blending of chinoiserie into a predominantly English rococo composition of great delicacy and the finest workmanship. *Stuart and Turner.*

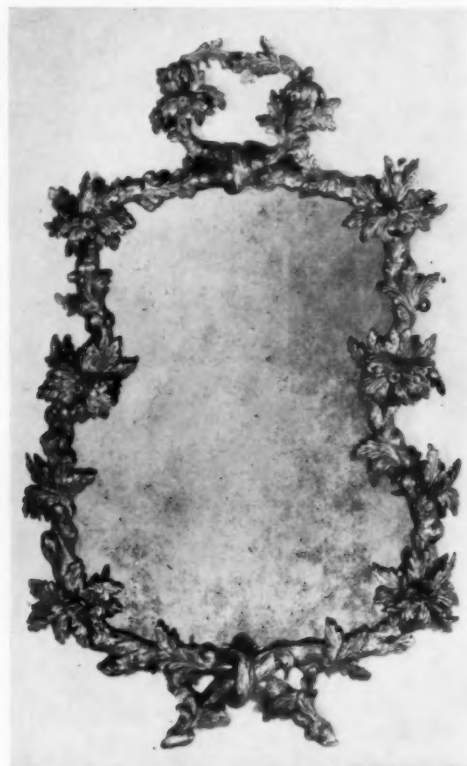


Fig. VIII. Rustic rather than rococo, this unusual frame, one of a pair, is skillfully composed and magnificently executed and finished. *Mallett.*

mostly in mahogany and pine veneered with mahogany; the frame-maker worked almost entirely in pine, which was then carved, gilded and, if of the best quality, burnished on all the high reliefs.

The difference between good quality carved mirror frames and the lower grades is clearly set forth in *The London Tradesman*, published in 1747. The author, after describing "A Set of Joiners who make nothing but Frames for Looking Glasses and Pictures and prepare them for the Carvers," sums up this tradesman as "... no more than a cobbling Carpenter or Joiner," and, in more complimentary strain, continues:

"The Frame-Maker sends the Frame thus prepared to the Carver: For there are a Class of Carvers who do nothing else but carve Frames for Looking-Glasses. There are two Sorts of Carving upon these kind of Frames: One Sort of them is carved in the Wood entirely, and is designed to be painted or gilded with Burnish-Gold: In the other, the Figures are first roughly cut out in the Wood, then the whole is covered with two or three Coats of Whiting, to the Thickness of a Quarter of an Inch; when this is dry, the

It is a very profitable Branch: If they work as Journeymen they may earn a Guinea a Week, if good Workmen; and if they work by the Piece, as they generally do, they may clear considerably more. It requires some Strength; therefor the Boy ought to be about fifteen Years of Age before he is bound."

The gold and silversmiths, the printers and the mirror frame-makers were among the leaders in introducing the French rococo and also the rococo/Chinese tastes to England in the 1730s and 1740s. Both fashions were very well established in English metal and gilt wood carving before Chippendale, in the 1754 first edition of his *Director*, completed the picture by illustrating a complete range of the then fashionable furniture in harmony. Abraham Swan, in *The British Architect*, published in 1744-5, had already shown rococo detail for chimney-pieces, whilst Henry Copland and Matthias Lock, who later worked as designers for Chippendale, had published several books of accomplished rococo designs between 1740 and 1752.

Another engraver who worked for Chippendale was Matthew Darly, who, in collaboration with Edwards, pro-

duced *A New Book of Chinese Designs* in 1754, the same year that saw the first edition of the *Director*. The title *A New Book of Chinese Designs* was probably to distinguish it from *Rural Architecture in the Chinese Taste*, which William and John Halfpenny had produced in 1750. In these two books appear practically every type of temple, portico, bridge, steps, alcove, summer-house, hermitage, arch, boat, ho-ho bird, dragon, tree, etc., which is found in "Chinese carved mirror frames."

No article on mirror frames would be complete without mention of the influence of Thomas Johnson, who was a carver, teacher of drawing and modelling, and author of several books of designs between 1755 and 1761. Johnson admittedly borrowed from Chippendale's 1754 *Director*—Chippendale repaid the compliment by borrowing from Johnson in his 1762 edition. Johnson, however, was much more than a copyist; he was, in fact, extremely original in an insular manner. He described himself as "a truly antigallic spirit" and dedicated his *One Hundred and Fifty New Designs* (1756–58) to Lord Blakeney, "Grand President of the Antigallican Association." Johnson, in fact, was one of those who only approve of what is English, but he kidded himself that anything which he liked was English, and he accomplished it by setting himself to "naturalise" foreign motifs by welding them into an English composition. His favourite trick was to make his foliage carvings naturalistic, introduce familiar English country architecture, such as wind and water mills, rustic arches and figures of countrymen, dogs, squirrels, etc. The squirrels seem to have been a particularly favourite motif of his.

Johnson's designs have been criticised for their confusion, bizarre nature and lack of congruity, but this is a scholarly dissection of what was intended to be a light-hearted frolic. You can no more analyse it in this manner than you can a fashionable woman's latest whim in summer millinery, of which these mirror frames, etc., are often the furnishing equivalents. They were largely a reaction against the

tyranny of the classical orders, and though, in some instances, chinoiserie was but the trimming of a rococo foundation, in other cases it was intended as an "antigallic" alternative.

Fig. IV. is an excellent example of a very closely knit design of French rococo scrolls, acanthus, icicle drip, Chinese summer-house and a naturalistic swan all blended into a harmonious design which could only have been composed in mid-XVIIIth-century England. It will be noted in this and all the other examples illustrated that the bevelled plate, a former sign of quality, was right out of fashion during the rococo period.

Fig. V shows how a well-proportioned composition, based entirely on crisply carved and gilded rococo ornament, can yet look simple and dignified. The design has to be examined very carefully before it is apparent that there really is asymmetry all round the frame.

Fig. VI is a lively and harmoniously naturalistic composition of the finest quality: here the asymmetry is restricted to the scrolling of the surmounting acanthus. Fig. VII, which is fully equal in delicacy and quality, is a very felicitous example of a slight blending of chinoiserie into a predominantly English rococo composition.

The pair of frames, Fig. VIII, come into the same period as the other examples illustrated, but they are entirely different and most unusual because their governing rule is "rustic," in the same way as are many of the designs in Robert Manwaring's *Cabinet and Chair-Maker's Real Friend and Companion*, published in 1765. These frames, however, were obviously designed by some one much more gifted than Manwaring, and the proportions, depth and sharpness of the carving and burnishing of the gilding show that they were made by first-class craftsmen.

With the waning of rococo, due to the influence of Adam, mirrors became classical ornamental features again, but a much lighter and daintier neo-classic this time, and in great houses they were often used purely as wall linings of immense size, placed essentially to create vistas.

A SHAFT FROM APOLLO'S BOW: "We needs must love the lowest . . ."

ALL idylls are out of date. Theocritus and Tennyson, the Greeks and Guinevere; and when Arthur's erring Queen says: "It was my duty to have loved the highest," she was being just too, too Victorian. To-day,

"When lovely woman stoops to folly
And finds herself back in her room alone,
She smooths her hair with a mechanic gesture
And puts a record on the gramophone."

So whatever cause the contemporary Guinevere might have for regretting *l'affaire Lancelot* the failure of her duty to the highest would certainly not be the one cited. Values, in fact, seem to have gone into reverse. Goodness, truth, and beauty are at least outmoded; the circles of the intelligentsia are positively allergic to qualities so depressingly Greek.

I was reminded of this recently when I went to the exhibition of a young Chinese artist, Tseng Yu. In my old-fashioned way I have something of a passion for Chinese art, for the oriental genius which with a few strokes of the brush can snare some shape of beauty and a sense of life in an abiding loveliness which is at once Nature and art. Alas, it was nearly a thousand years ago when Kuo Hsi sought to express the Tao in his painting, and the classic art of China would appear to have been abandoned in the progressive East as that of Greece is in the West. Tseng Yu, now aged twenty-two, is a kind of Peking Picasso. He manages to make the worst of both worlds. Not only does he choose such fascinatingly oriental subjects as "Dumb Man carrying a Mad Girl," but the features of these afflicted persons have a way of breaking loose, in the most esteemed style of Parisian significant form.

We learn that Mr. Tseng Yu has a "hatred of every kind of constrictive system," and by a neat piece of anti-clerical propaganda he attributes this hatred to "the corporal punish-

ment automatically administered in the name of discipline" at the Catholic College in Peking where he learned English. Anyway, to whatever source psycho-analysis might trace it, the result in paint is perfectly hideous. The basic attitude to aesthetics which these painful moments in the classroom engendered is indicated in another of Tseng Yu's comments:

"The beauty of London," he says, "lies not on her bright flowers and tender trees, but on her dirt, filth, mud and smog, and the magnificent slum swamp along the banks of Thames."

Perhaps this, too, is discreet propaganda to explain the presence still of dirt, filth and magnificent slum swamps along the banks of the Yellow River; but it shows at least that ideals of beauty are in world-wide flux.

Of course it is arguable that all this is only a generous broadening of the artistic vision which is now able to find beauty and virtue where our narrow-minded forebears remained unmoved or nauseated. At another contemporary exhibition—this time quite unequivocally English and Western democratic—the artist has found his significant form in the plumbing and seating accommodation of what house-agents euphuistically call "the usual domestic offices." This interior is happily without figures; but then this widening of the field of art is still in its infancy. It is baldly represented on the large scale typical of the new realism. I cannot personally conceive of even the smartest of smart hostesses hanging this in the drawing-room of her Mews Cottage, so we can assume that it has been painted with an eye on the Contemporary Arts Society or some other source. Or perhaps with no ulterior mercenary urge at all, only that of an artist whose soul is stirred by the pure form of something which would have had vulgar associations in the scabrous mind of a Tennysonian Victorian. *Honi soit . . .*

CERAMIC CAUSERIE

"THE CHERRY PICKERS"

IN spite of the long-standing popularity and nearly unmis-takeable characteristics of Chinese porcelain decorated to the order of European patrons, it is still the subject of widespread misconceptions.

Even its common name "Lowestoft" is based on a mistake; one that was corrected shortly after it was made. In spite of the passing of three-quarters of a century since Chaffers' blunder, Lowestoft remains in everyday use on both sides of the Atlantic.

A recent visit to a small country shop with the word "ANTIQUES" optimistically blazoned in Old English lettering across the fascia, led to the purchase for 3s. 6d. of an XVIIIth-century Chinese cup and saucer—neither quite matching in design, but both of the same date. The cup was decorated in black and gold with a figure of Juno, crowned and seated on a cloud, accompanied by her favourite peacock. The subject was explained with enthusiasm, but rather hazily, by the seller: "It's Queen Anne herself, you know. I think it come from foreign or some place . . . it were done from a photo. It's very old. I bought it from an old lady, and she said it were Queen Anne."

An unnoticed little volume, published in 1882, gives a good account of many examples of this type of porcelain. It is referred to by the author as "Jesuit" china—as good a term as any in view of the fact that the French missionaries were the initiators of its production. The book is entitled: *Indo-European Porcelain: An Essay with Descriptive Catalogue*, by W. Watkins Old, F.R.Hist.Soc., and was issued at Hereford by James Hull, Steam Printer, Widemarsh Street.

A pattern that is quite well known to students and collectors is one that is generally entitled "The Cherry Pickers, after a painting by Nicolas Lancret," and of which a specimen on a plate in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Massachusetts, is reproduced on this page. Mr. Old states that this illustrates an incident in Rousseau's *Confessions*, and shows Jean-Jacques Rousseau on a ladder gathering cherries for Mlle Graffenreid and Mlle de Galley. The former lady is seated on the ground, and Mlle de Galley (*l'un an plus jeune et encore plus jolie*) holds out her apron to catch the fruit. The Chinese artist has captured the general spirit of the scene, doubtless from a European engraving, but Mlle de Galley's youth and prettiness are not obvious in this instance to Western eyes!

The book was first issued in Geneva in 1782, four years after the death of the author, and the Oriental pieces would date from the year of publication and onwards. Finally, it may be added that Nicolas Lancret, to whom the original design is usually attributed, died in 1743.

A BUST OF THOMAS FRYE

The accomplished Irish artist, who played a yet unknown part in the fortunes of the Bow china manufactory, remains an elusive quarry for historians of ceramics. A short biography of him appeared in the *European Magazine* for December, 1788, and from it we learn that its subject had died twenty-six years earlier—in April, 1762. In view of the lapse of time, it is little to be wondered at that the notice is somewhat inaccurate.

In 1763, at the annual exhibition of the Free Society of Artists, held in the "Great Room" of the Society of Arts, was exhibited a bust of "Mr. Frye." The sculptor was Benjamin Rackstrow—a man who combined the practice of his art with the ownership of a museum at 197, Fleet Street, which was one of the sights of London at that date.* The catalogue entry read:

- 169 A busto of the Marquis of Granby; large as life.
170 Ditto of Mr. Frye.

* See R. Gunnis: *Dictionary of British Sculptures*, 1953, p. 314.



Chinese Plate decorated with "The Cherry Pickers."
Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

The Marquis of Granby was then at the height of his military prowess and wide popularity, and in 1763 was made master-general of the Ordnance on his return from the Seven Years' War. A bust of a man who was so well known and liked would be sure of an enthusiastic reception; porcelain statuettes and busts, engravings and inn signs of him that survive in large numbers are a proof of this point.

Can the second bust, *Mr. Frye*, have been a likeness of the artist? His features are not unknown to us from mezzotint self-portraits, but it is interesting to notice that his bust should have been reckoned of sufficient importance to have been shown alongside that of an acclaimed public character. While the lack of any Christian name or initial leaves the catalogue entry tantalisingly obscure, can any "Mr. Frye" other than Thomas Frye have been the subject?

SOME PAST COLLECTORS—RALPH BERNAL, M.P. (17(?)–1854)

Ralph Bernal was a Member of Parliament for several constituencies between 1820 and 1852, and Chairman of Committees from 1830 for a period of twenty years. The year prior to his death, 1853, he was President of the British Archaeological Association. Just a century ago, his large collection of works of art was dispersed. The sale by auction occupied no fewer than thirty-two days, and the 4,300 lots realised a sum of about £70,000. Ralph Bernal's taste was catholic, and he amassed a great quantity of articles of all periods, ranging in variety from arms and armour to Venetian glass, and including enamels, china, glass, pictures, silverware and "bygones." Of the collector himself, it was said: "Mr. Bernal could be tempted by nothing that was inferior."

The porcelain in the collection represented the productions of both East and West. Among the latter, Sèvres was then the most highly esteemed, and two pairs of vases were purchased by the Marquess of Hertford for a total of £3,360. In contrast, a pair of Chelsea vases, described in the catalogue as:

488. A pair of beautiful globular scalloped vases and covers, deep blue, painted with exotic birds, with pierced borders and covers, fetched 105 guineas, and the following lot, apparently from the same factory:

489. A cup and saucer, with festoons raised in white (chipped), realised only a single guinea.

A high proportion of the lots was purchased by the Board of Trade to form a Museum of Ornamental Art, later to become the Victoria and Albert Museum.

GEOFFREY WILLS.

EARLY MEISSEN KAKIEMON

BY PERCY W. HUNT

THE subject of "Kakiemon" and its influence on the porcelain of Europe is too well discussed a subject to introduce to readers of *APOLLO*.* On the other hand, the specimens of early Meissen, forming as they do the foundation of European hard porcelain, are of such historical importance that they will always command the interest of collectors. It is this interest, coupled with their decorative qualities, that makes one feel justified in bringing forward these illustrations.

I am indebted to Sir Harry Garner (honorary secretary of the Oriental Ceramic Society) for Figures I, II and III. These three pieces have close associations with pieces in the British Museum and the Royal Saxon Collection. Figures I and III bear incised inventory numbers, N=4□ and N=322_w. Two pairs of similarly decorated dishes to Fig. I are in the British Museum. They bear the incised numbers N=7□ and N=73□, and are labelled "about 1700." A similar bowl to Fig. III is in the Victoria and Albert Museum with incised N=456_w.

Figs. I and II are both Arita ware, and differ from Meissen mainly in their freedom of brushwork and technical maturity of production. One is struck by the condition of these pieces after the passage of two and a half centuries.

Figs. II and III are bowls with an identical design of peony and prunus outside. Inside is a central phoenix and two dragons and pearls on the flange. The Meissen copy deviates a little in shape, but is otherwise a close replica except in shades of enamel. Meissen did not seem able to produce a turquoise of the same brilliancy as on Arita ware.

It is difficult to say which of these bowls is the finer, but if the Meissen copy falls short by being just a trifle stiff in drawing, it is a creditable effort from a factory in the first stages of development. A similar Meissen piece in the Victoria and Albert Museum is dated "about 1725." The experimental nature of the paste is noticeable on the top left rim of Fig. III; these two bowls, from East and West, can be put side by side and enhance one another.

Figs. IV and V are Meissen pieces of the first quarter of the XVIIIth century. Fig. IV has an incised mark N 72_w and an over the glaze swords mark. The writhe mark from

* See *Apollo*, February, 1954, page 44.

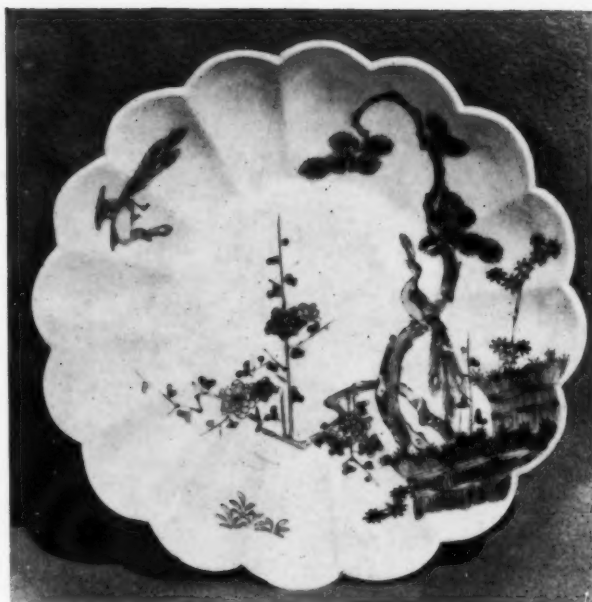


Fig. I. Arita Ware, about 1700. Incised mark N=4□

the top centre shows this plate was at point of collapse when fired. The colouring is limited to green with a black outline and red with gold. The tiger and bamboo motif—weakness and strength—is cleverly portrayed with an enquiring look of the tiger, who suspects a bamboo trap!

Fig. V, a rare cinquefoil bowl with five lobed sides, is similar in shape to one in the Victoria and Albert Museum, with an incised N=338_w and an over the glaze swords mark. Both the museum bowl and Fig. V have numerous moons of a smaller variety to those in Chelsea. Plain water can be discerned through the walls of these bowls under transmuted daylight. This quail pattern was to become one of the stock patterns of Bow and Chelsea a quarter of a century later. Respectful care for this frail little bowl can be the only reason for its present mint condition.

Finally, in Figs. VI and VII are two plates of the same design. Fig. VI is one of a Meissen service which has seen considerable wear. Moulded plates of this type are represented in both the Victoria and Albert Museum and the British Museum, and were produced in vast quantities, including Chinese and European motifs. A similar plate in the Victoria and Albert Museum has a firecrack about three inches in length, and is dated about 1735—evidence



Fig. II. Arita Ware, about 1700, unmarked.



Fig. III. Meissen, about 1725. Crossed swords. Overglaze. N=322_w incised.

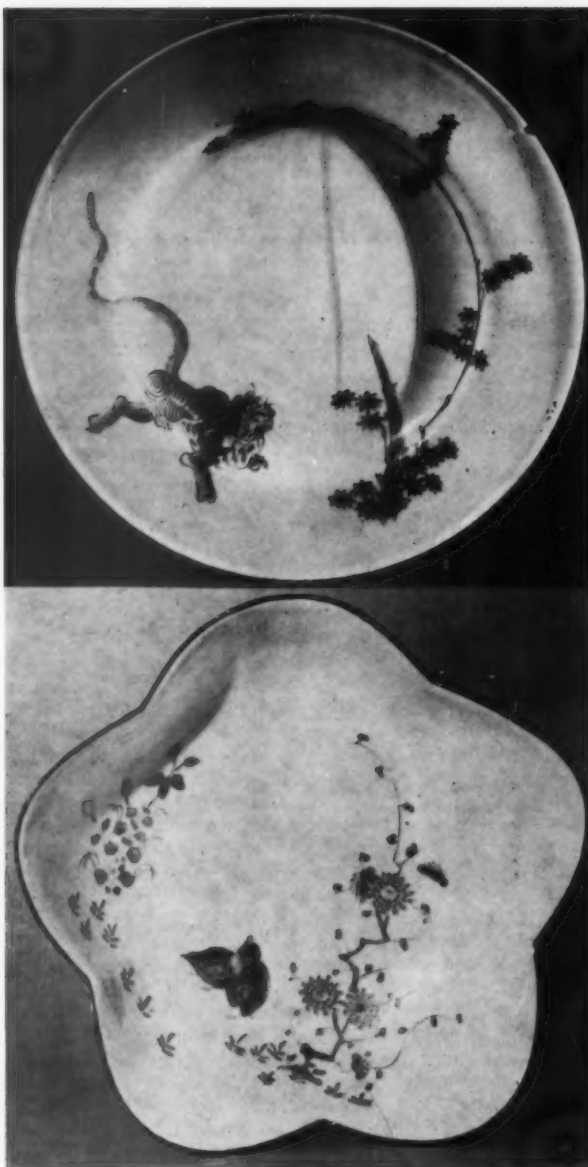


Fig. IV (top). Meissen. Crossed swords, blue overglaze. N72w incised about 1720. Note the wreath mark from the top centre.

Fig. V. Meissen. Crossed swords, blue underglaze, about 1725.

that technical difficulties were not yet overcome. Fig. VII is a soft paste deep dish made as a replacement or an extension to a Meissen service, perhaps during the Seven Years' War, 1756-63, when Saxony was overrun by the Prussians. Although this dish has many of the characteristics of Bow, including spur marks, weight, and discoloration where the paste is exposed, I am told that there is no record of the use of an osier mould of this type either by Bow or Chelsea. Perhaps a mould was constructed from a glazed Meissen piece of a larger size to allow for a shrinkage of about one-eighth. Certainly there is a marked difference in the sharpness of Fig. VI. The complete fusing of enamels with the glaze makes this dish brighter and more durable than the hard paste examples. Whichever factory was responsible for this dish it was not content with all the minor details, but also copied the crossed swords in blue over the glaze.

There is much to be said for the tidy method of segregation rather than linking pieces together, as I have done above in associating Arita, Meissen and then our own soft paste, which many collectors may feel just as satisfying.



Fig. VI (top). Meissen. Crossed swords, blue overglaze, about 1735.

Fig. VII. English soft paste. Crossed swords, blue overglaze.

Hampton Court Palace has some Arita pieces which, as they were collected in the reign of Queen Mary II, are judged to be earlier than those from the Dresden Collection, which are not considered to date much before 1700.



ARTISTS ABOUT ARTISTS. CRUX CRITICORUM

DANTE GABRIEL ROSSETTI (speaking of MANET's "Déjeuner sur l'Herbe"):

"Simple putrescence and decomposition."

DEGAS (speaking of BERTHE MORISOT):

"She paints pictures as she would make hats."

(Speaking of a picture by MEISSONIER):

"Everything is metal, except the breastplates."

He disliked Cézanne for his earnestness and what seemed to him incompetence.

WHISTLER (in his old age, speaking of CEZANNE):

"... if a six-year-old child painted like this, his mother would give him a deserved whipping."

CORNWALL'S STUDIO POTTERIES *By DENYS VAL BAKER*

"THE artist-craftsman should be the natural source of contemporary applied design, whether he works in conjunction with industry or prefers, as most of us do, to carry out our ideas in clay, cotton, wood, glass, metal or leather, etc., mainly with our own hands and at our own tempo. The hand is the prime tool and it expresses human feelings intimately; the machine for quantity, cheapness and, at best, a marvellous efficiency, but it turns man into a modern slave unless it is counterbalanced by work which springs from the heart and gives form to the human imagination."

When Bernard Leach wrote those words he was thinking in general terms: but for a particular application of that feeling for individual craftsmanship in pottery one can find an excellent example in the development, over the past thirty years, of the Cornish studio potteries.

Pottery and Cornwall have always been strongly linked, if only because the county is the home of the immense china clay industry centred mainly around St. Austell. For centuries, pottery, along with other of the traditional country crafts, like basket-making, weaving and wrought-iron work, has been produced in various parts of Cornwall: and, indeed, Cornish pottery is an honoured old name, usually applied to the range of simple but undecorated and unglazed red clay pots, of which the familiar water pitcher is a typical example.

In the development of more variety in shape and colour, and the creation of what has almost become a new industry in Cornwall, lies the influence of Bernard Leach and his Leach Pottery Group at St. Ives. Collectors and others with interest in the topic will know that Leach himself was trained in Japan, where pots are almost as much a part of everyday life as food itself, and every small village has its own pottery. From Japan he brought many Eastern ideas, which he wished, on returning to England, to combine with the best ideas of Western craftsmanship.

Together with the Japanese potter Hamada, Bernard Leach founded the Leach Pottery at St. Ives in 1920. From the outset the belief was that making and planning round the individuality of the artist was a necessary step in the evolu-



Leach Pottery. Standard domestic ware.

tion of the crafts: and so the economy was based on studio lines rather than on the country workshop or factory.

"In 1920 Hamada was 28, and I was 33; he had not yet exhibited, whilst I had been launched in his country as an artist and potter for ten years. He had had a scientific training whilst I had made a lot of mistakes and gained thereby some experience. For three years we had a good partnership. The background of thought which we brought to the undertaking was that of the artist turned craftsman; or, at least, of the educated and thinking man perceiving the largely unconscious beauty of material, workmanship and general approach which preceded the industrial revolution, and his desire to recapture some of the lost values through the work of his own hands. So it was with Morris, Gimson and Edward Johnston. East or West, this is the counter-revolution, the refusal of the slavery of the machine."

In those early years Leach experimented with middle-temperature English slipware, high-temperature Oriental stoneware and hard porcelain, and the Japanese style of low-temperature Raku firings (the latter technique was used once a week for demonstrations, when visitors to the pottery were allowed to paint their own pots, which were then glazed and fired in their presence). Later experience, however, made Leach desire to concentrate on domestic ware as a balance to rather expensive personal pottery, though examples of the latter were much in demand for art and craft shows in London, America, Japan, and other centres.

Up till 1937 Leach pottery was fired in an old-fashioned wood-firing kiln, but this was replaced by the installation of oil-burning kilns. At the same time slipware was given up in favour of the higher-fired stoneware "because it suits the conditions of modern life better and offers a wider field of suggestion and experiment." In this stoneware the pottery produces a wide range of beakers, jugs, teapots, porringers, egg-bakers, pitchers, bowls, vases, etc., some decorated with Eastern style brushwork, the majority undecorated but glazed in many coloured, mottled and speckled glazes.

Not unnaturally, the Leach Pottery and the distinguished reputation of its founder drew many followers. From the



Mead Set in Celadon, glazed stoneware. DAVID LEACH.

beginning, a policy of taking student apprentices was followed, while, in addition, short courses were periodically held for art students and other visitors: altogether it is estimated that about 400 students have passed through the pottery. This co-operative work is regarded as very important by Bernard Leach, for he believes that a craft such as pottery depends upon a slow passage of time: the gradual transfer of the bodily knowledge of the right usage of material and the intimate co-operation of small groups of workers. "At the Leach Pottery, by accepting the Cornish motto of one and all, and by making the workshop a *we* job instead of an *I* job, we appear to have solved our main economic problem as hand-workers in a machine age."

As might be expected, from the Leach Pottery stemmed a number of later Cornish studio potteries. Outstanding among Leach pupils, apart from his sons David and Michael, are Michael Cardew, Harry Davis, Kenneth Murray, Laurie Cookes and Katharine Pleydell-Bouverie all potters with an ever-increasing number of admirers. The

and later set up their own small studios have been John Nash, now running the Marazion Pottery in sight of St. Michael's Mount; and Kenneth Johnson, who has started on his own at Carbis Bay.

While the ideas and example of Bernard Leach and his St. Ives pottery group inspired many of the early studio potters of Cornwall, in recent years there has been a movement away from the sometimes austere style and colouring of Leach pottery.

Even in St. Ives itself, a town that by reason of its well-known connection with artists is unusually craft conscious—and, indeed, pottery conscious, for there are probably a dozen pottery shops—the demand is increasingly for brighter, more sophisticated pottery. In particular, highly decorated pottery is found to be more than ever popular with the holiday crowds, seeking a touch of colour in lives that, with the advent of a sort of permanent bad weather, seem unusually drab.

Representative of the newer studio potteries, situated



Serafite stoneware jar, rust and grey.
BERNARD LEACH.



Part of an afternoon tea set in dove-grey and brown stoneware, wax decoration.
CROWAN POTTERY.

first two of these have chosen Cornwall as the background for their own potteries—Michael Cardew's at Wenlock Bridge, near Bodmin, and Harry and May Davis's workshop at Crowan, between Camborne and Helston.

In both cases, the Leach influence is strongly noticeable, but over the years each potter has created his own individuality. Michael Cardew has also been influenced by periods spent in Africa, where he teaches pottery to the Africans, while at the same time absorbing their traditions. At his Cornish pottery, where he usually spends a part of each year, Cardew produces both stoneware and slipware, very sturdy and masculine in character, usually decorated in traditional fashion, with cut-away glaze patterns or slip trails.

At Crowan, the Davises have converted an old water-mill into a modern pottery, obtaining all power and electricity from the water, though the actual firing, as at Leach's, is done by oil-burning kilns. The Crowan pottery ware is much more utilitarian than Cardew's, and output mainly consists of tableware, including dinner and tea sets. A feature of Crowan pottery is the range of pleasing single colours used; decoration is not an important feature, the emphasis being on shape and fine colours.

In addition to Leach's influence through his pottery, it has also been distributed through Penzance Art School, where for some years Bernard, and later his son Michael, has taught pottery. Among potters who have trained there

almost at opposite ends of the county, is the Tintagel Pottery, in the heart of King Arthur country, on the north coast, and the Lamorna Pottery, situated a few miles from Land's End.

The Tintagel Pottery, like Leach's and others, is organised on an ambitious scale. By that I mean that although staff is small by industrial standards, it is large for a studio pottery, and work is efficiently geared to permit of export trade with Africa, Pakistan, Canada and other overseas countries, as well as nation-wide sales in Britain. This, however, applies mainly to off-season times: during the summer the pottery is fully engaged with fulfilling Cornish orders, and a very big on-the-spot trade (in the height of the season daily visitors to the pottery sometimes number hundreds).

The Tintagel Pottery, which was founded in 1950 by Mrs. Kathleen Everard and a Norwegian potter, Peter Quam, certainly has the most romantic setting of any of the Cornish potteries, being established at Bossinney Court, a four-acre estate mentioned in Domesday Book and thought to have been built in the IXth or Xth century (once occupied by Sir Richard Grenville). The main business of the pottery is done in a huge converted two-story barn, fitted with modern kilns, electric wheels, stillages, etc.

By using tin glazes only, and generally confining decorations to blues and greens, applied freehand in the form of simple pictorial designs or sometimes Celtic symbols, the Tintagel Pottery has managed to give its pots a look of brightness and gaiety which at once catches the eye. In shop windows its work usually stands out from other pots;

CORNWALL'S STUDIO POTTERIES

Selection of tin-glaze domestic ware by Penzance Pottery.



on the other hand, this very advantage might rebound on longer acquaintance, that is, too much brightness in a room might eventually irritate.

Still, by introducing some Scandinavian ideas, combined with Celtic mythology, Tintagel has introduced a new variety of pottery in Cornwall. Production covers an unusually wide range of shapes, including dishes, bowls, toast racks, ash trays, lemon squeezers, tea and coffee sets, miniatures, plaques, vases, etc. Another feature is the range of individually made character figures, partly raw-fired, partly glazed.

Lamorna Pottery, founded by Christopher Ludlow and Derek Willshaw, caters for a more sophisticated taste. It is interesting to note that the two partners were originally trained at Buller's Art School in Stoke-on-Trent, and thus they brought to a Cornish studio pottery many of the ideas of the Staffordshire potters. Also set in very pleasant surroundings, just off beautiful Lamorna Cove, yet another of the Cornish art colonies, the Lamorna Pottery has built up a reputation for finely produced pots with an extremely polished finish. For those who like the rougher, traditional sort of pottery, Lamorna pots would hold little appeal. But on the other hand, they make an obvious appeal to modernist eyes, and go well with contemporary furnishing designs. Like Tintagel, the Lamorna Pottery specialises in tin glazes, which obviate the necessity for a separate slipping process. Decorations by Christopher Ludlow are a special feature, varying from Cornish-fish type of designs to more intricate patterns. Both under- and over-glaze decorations are used, and there is a good deal of highly glossed finish.



Stoneware Jar. Olive Green Glaze. NANCY HOMER.

It was this pottery which won first prize in last year's Bath and West Show.

Three years ago, two of the staff of Lamorna Pottery, Leonard Missen and Anthony Richards, left to set up their own Penzance Pottery. After a year of trial and error, in which Lamorna influences were naturally strong, Penzance has evolved a distinctive style of its own, and produces an interesting range of modern pottery in what might be called a contemporary style. Very sensibly they made the basis of their initial output a number of utilitarian items, such as cruet and vinegar sets, but at the same time they have produced many exhibition pieces—large bowls, jugs, etc. Slip-trail and serafito decorations are a feature; tin glazes are mainly used. The recent death in a car accident of Leonard Missen was a sad blow, but Antony Richards is carrying on.

The western tip of Cornwall must have some secret fascination for potters, for it is within this peninsula that most of the studios are to be found. In addition to Leach, Crowan, Lamorna and Penzance, there is the Marazion Pottery, run by John Nash, and producing some very pleasant highly polished glazes; while over at Carbis Bay Kenneth Johnson, who built his own large kiln, is one of the few Cornish potters working entirely on his own, doing a good deal of experimental work. Another new pottery, the St. Hilary Pottery, in the same area, has made a feature of pictorially decorated pots, taking the familiar Cornish fishing boat as a basic theme. Its ware, decorated in this fashion and fired in cream and blue, and also in a golden glaze obtained by using St. Hilary clay, has proved very popular with seaside visitors. It has recently also introduced an unusual lustre black glaze and some striped ware.

In the space left me I can only now make passing reference to two potteries on the north coast, Mrs. Nancy Homer's of St. Agnes, and the Bodriggery Pottery, near Perranporth; while at Looe, on the south-east coast, there is also another studio pottery run by Kenneth Webb.

At Mevagissey a cruder form of pottery, pinchware (not thrown) has been introduced by a painter, Lionel Miskin, and his wife; and in the same town Bernard Moss is modelling some unusual rocking figures. And on the Scilly Isles there is, appropriately enough, a rather lonely potter whose surname actually is Potter, working mostly in moulded pots, but finding even in the Scillies enough trade to keep him in production.

It will be seen that there is considerable variety in the work of the Cornish studio potters, whether it be the very solid and traditional stoneware of the Leach pottery, or the gay, vividly decorated ware of Tintagel. Cornwall itself has so many romantic airs, and is now such a popular centre for the arts—as well as the holidaymakers!—that one may expect the studio potters to flourish.

VIEWS and NEWS of ART in AMERICA

By Professor Erik Larsen, Litt.D., M.A.

THOMAS COLE. American School, 1801-1848.

The Voyage of Life. No. 2. Youth. From the Collection of The Manor of St. George. (Tangier Smith Foundation, Mastic, Long Island.)



AFTER a quiet summer, the art season is off to an early start. Wanderers return from abroad, principally Europe, their eyes full of marvels they were privileged to behold, and everybody is in need of a little time to adjust again to everyday life. As far as major exhibitions are concerned, the Museum of Modern Art beat everybody to the start with a retrospective memorial show of paintings and drawings by Yves Tanguy. A Frenchman by birth, the artist made his home in America for quite a few years, before his sudden death last winter. Concurrently, the Museum presents a showing of some twenty early de Chirico paintings; dating from the Greek-born artist's "most brilliant and influential" period. It is common knowledge that Chirico has recanted since and expresses himself through a realistic medium. During October, the A. & E. Silberman Galleries plan to arrange in their new home on Madison Avenue a loan exhibition of the most significant paintings they sold in this country over the last thirty years. Further details about both events shall be available in next month's report.

The current big news is that we have a new director at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. He is Mr. James J. Rorimer, a Cleveland-born Harvard graduate, and well known to the public since he has come up through the ranks. His last appointment was that of director at The Cloisters—the Metropolitan's medieval branch in Fort Tryon Park. There, Mr. Rorimer has done an outstanding job, turning what might have been a dust-gathering collection visited by specialists exclusively into a living and imaginative experience for the general public. To cite the available attendance figure for 1954 only: the Cloisters were visited during that year by more than seven hundred thousand persons! The new director is himself a distinguished scholar, whose main interest lies obviously with medieval art, but who published also valuable studies on technical aspects such as "Ultra-Violet Rays and Their Use in the Examination of Works of Art." His name stands associated with such major acquisitions as, e.g., the Unicorn, the Nine Heroes, and the Charles VIII tapestries, all of which were rendered possible through the generosity of Mr. Rockefeller who, in 1952, presented the Museum with a fund of some ten million dollars.

Mr. Rorimer believes in humanisation and scholarship as the main motive forces of a successful museum policy, and hopes thereby to afford visual pleasure to the casual visitor as well as to the professional scholar. His emphasis on public appeal can be considered as a portent of things to come at the Metropolitan. Our best wishes for a successful career go out to the dynamic and sympathetic sixth director who is henceforth to preside over the destinies of that great institution.

It might be an effect of the law of opposites that, after the largest and oldest art museum in this country, we turn now our regards to the latest-come and, perchance, smallest institution of the kind in the profession—the Manor of St. George, located at Mastic, Long Island, officially inaugurated on August 31st. The Estate began its career in 1693, when Colonel William Smith—Tangier Smith for his services as mayor of the Royal City of Tangier, North Africa—was granted by King William and Queen Mary the patent establishing the Manor of St. George embracing tens of thousands of acres in Brookhaven Town. The township of Brookhaven, Long Island, is still extant and flourishing; lately, it became best known as a site har-

bouring a nuclear reactor! To revert to Colonel Smith, let us hasten to state that he made a distinguished career in the colony. He served as acting Governor, was later appointed an Associate Justice at the New York Supreme Court and remained on the Bench until two years before his death. To his last illness, however, he retained a seat as member of the Governor's Council.

The Smith family remained thence intimately associated with the history of Long Island; they are counted as part of that aristocracy of early settlers that later was to furnish the spiritual fathers of our country. During the War of 1776, the Manor became Fort St. George; first British held, then captured by American forces in a commando style operation. Members of the family were at the Manor until 1954, when the last descendant, Miss Eugenie A. T. Smith, passed away; her will designated Messrs. George C. and Hugh S. Furman as trustees of the estate, and directed that St. George be set up as a public foundation, at the same time providing ample funds for the upkeep. During these last months, the Manor was found to contain thousands of rare documents, books, letters and other papers that were carefully stowed away in almost a hundred cabinets and chests. They are being sorted by Mr. Chester G. Osborne, Curator of Manuscripts, and are said to provide interesting sidelights concerning the early history of Long Island. The curatorship of the art collections has been entrusted to the Viennese-born art restorer Alexander Lindemann—a connoisseur of international repute—who fortunately lives nearby and could therefore be prevailed upon to give the trustees the benefit of his wide experience. To begin with, he already discovered in an attic of the Manor House four completely neglected paintings that after competent cleaning and restoration turned out to be the long sought after *modellos* for "The Voyage of Life"—the well-known composition by the XIXth-century American painter, Thomas Cole, who painted several large-sized sets based upon them. We reproduce here No. 2 of the series, representing "Youth." Another exciting find is a hitherto unknown "Smoker" by Frans Hals. I shall come back in the near future to the canvas and the thrilling circumstances accompanying its rediscovery.

The art critic Emily Genauer devotes two articles in the *Herald Tribune Bookreview* to a recent survey conducted by the Bureau of Social Research of the American University, Washington, D.C., financed by a grant from John D. Rockefeller III. Its object was: "Art Exhibit Audiences; Who Comes? Why? With What Effects?" The salient points standing out are: 1. Museum attendance is at an all-time high in this country, totalling annually well over fifty million people. 2. A high percentage of visitors will not come back because they are unprepared as to subject-matter, and the museums fail to offer sufficient explanatory wall labels, inexpensive catalogue-guides, public lectures and guided tours. We seem to stand on the threshold of a wave of unprecedented interest for matters artistic. It will be the duty of the professional to furnish, in collaboration with the *entrepreneurs* of modern means of communication (publishers, newspapers, radio and T.V.), ample and well-conceived popularisation material suited to the extensive public demand.

EVENTS IN PARIS



Montmartre in the Rain.
BONNARD (1897). Signed and Dated.

COMING back to Europe on the *Liberté*, I met numerous Americans for whom France was still the carefree picturesque place that Somerset Maugham wrote of in *Of Human Bondage*, and that numerous films have tried very hard to re-create with the help of a little Montmartre décor. I wondered whether some of these pleasant summer-season refugees from materialism, many of whom have saved for years to be able to afford a three-month trip to Europe, and whose faith in European *savoir-vivre* is often extremely moving, would be disappointed by the hard and slightly Americanised reality of post-war France. At all costs, those who favour a retreat into the gentle days of the turn of the century can always spend an hour or two at the Musée d'Art Moderne, where a huge Retrospective groups the Nabi painters, with pride of place and space being given to Bonnard and Vuillard.

Nabi means "prophet" in Hebrew, and the esoteric title itself suggests something of the Bohemian farce for which the movement was undoubtedly taken at the time. Gauguin, with his ideas on "synthesis," on the "pure palette," on religious mysticism and symbolic values, was the chief inspirer. Having abandoned the Stock Exchange, his wife and child and all earthly responsibilities, he was quietly shocking the Bretons with his curious, almost bi-dimensional, paintings when Emile Bernard came under his wing: Sérusier, Roussel and Maurice Denis were soon to follow. Sérusier, armed with a cigar-box lid, painted under the dictates of the master and described by the younger painter as a "talisman which cut the cataract from my eyes," hurried back to Paris, where he soon enrolled Ranson, Ibels, Bonnard and Vuillard under the banner. The brotherhood adopted esoteric language and mystic ritual, and might easily have become little more than a fad.

But Gauguin lived the fad to the end; he even died of it. And if the works of Ranson, Denis, Redon and the other smaller names leave little impression on our senses to-day, there is something more in Roussel, considerably more in Bernard and Sérusier, and undoubted genius in Vuillard and Pierre Bonnard. And Denis's catch-phrase—"Before being a battle horse, a nude or an anecdote, a picture is essentially a flat surface covered with colours assembled in a certain order"—could be truly called the watchword of all XXth-century art.

What one notices most about these warm gas-lit interiors, these striking Toulouse-Lautreckian posters, these tiny book illustrations or mellow portraits is the astonishing *douceur de vivre* that reigns throughout it all. A sketch of poor beggar children is fatalism rather than protest; early socialist cartoons are little more than polite prods at a guilty conscience; most of the figures in the paintings are sitting in resigned contentment in red-green rooms or splashing impressionistically in the turquoise waters of Etretat. What a wonderful life! It is hard to remember that these were the days of Zola's angry-Dickensian

novels, of the Panama Scandal, of Fashoda, of the Dreyfus case. But then, of course, Dreyfus spent six years on Devil's Island waiting for a trial revision and seven more years awaiting army reinstatement. Time was cheap then, and you can tell that from the pictures very eloquently.

It is hard to pick on one painting more than another for special mention, and although Vuillard and Bonnard—and, of course, Gauguin, who is only briefly represented—dominate the others in talent, it seems unfitting, with an exhibition of this sort, to dwell on them at greater length than on their fellows. For this group, although their techniques often differed—Felix Vallotton, for instance, seems at first glance to have little in common with Xavier Roussel—has a homogeneity of feeling which few groups since have ever shown. The Paris crowd—in which everyone is an individual, striving to escape from the rest—or the dowdy Paris interior with the family sitting formally on uncomfortable chairs, are treated alike by each of the Nabis with piercing colour-consciousness, with a fine disrespect for photographic form and with the same mixture of tenderness and mockery.

There are three hundred and twenty-three exhibits in this show, and for those who desire a little more the *Maison de la Pensée Française* has a large exhibition of Bonnard. Here the emphasis is more on Bonnard the vivid colourist of recent times, Bonnard the Renoiresque adorer of human flesh and flowerpot hats. Among the earlier pictures, his superb "Place Clichy" has a wall to itself. This canvas dates from 1912: the car looks like a stagecoach, the waiters have impressive sideburns and the women all look overdressed. But has the scene changed so very much? The American traveller in search of Edward VII's Paris might well, with Bonnard's help, find that the wars—civil, political and global—have not entirely destroyed the Paris everybody has hidden somewhere in his romantic soul. The architecture of Montmartre is just the same as when Bonnard painted it, the air of nervous vivacity is still there in the brittle sunlight. The atmosphere of a vast tragi-comic fair to which we are all inevitably resigned is very much the same. The world might be a better place if we took a dose of Dr. Gauguin's fatalism panacea and a glance at the passing scene through Bonnard-Vuillard-Sérusier-coloured spectacles. These two important exhibitions give us that opportunity. We have nothing to lose.

The gallery world, in the backwash of the holidays, is quiet at present. Museum exhibitions still running include masterpieces from Cologne Museum (Orangerie), Picasso (Musée des Arts Décoratifs), X-ray photographs of canvases by Rembrandt (Louvre laboratory), and a collection of pictures and objects connected with Marie Antoinette (Château de Versailles).

R. W. H.

ROBERT ROUSSIL. Canadian Sculptor.

ACHIEVEMENTS WITH TREE TRUNKS.

By MARJORIE SCHWARTZ of Montreal

FRENCH-CANADIAN sculptor Robert Roussil has been called the Bad Boy of Canadian art. In Montreal, his sculpture has been smashed, jailed and ridiculed on grounds it was obscene, immoral, and crude.

His answer to his critics was to work hard until he could rest his defence on a prodigious amount of sculpture that has probably won him more living-room space than any other young contemporary sculptor.

Now his slow-won acquittal has already begun to fill the pockets of the 28-year-old sculptor with cheques from secretaries, architects, labourers and business men. Most of the cheques, though, are post-dated. For those who buy sculptures from Roussil usually do it on individual instalment plans.

Roussil's growing recognition has opened the way to work with architects and to discover what he considers the function of sculpture in modern society.

Montreal architect Max Roth feels that modern architecture can now use sculpture as an integral part of design rather than ornamentation, as it has become sterile in striving after functional lines. He and other architects who share this view have begun to give Roussil commissions for inside and outside sculpture, on both industrial buildings and private homes.

One unique Roussil mural is a Dance of Peace panel, worked from metal, which he did for an outside wall of a new Montreal home, built in fashionable Westmount. He chose stainless steel and copper as the best materials to stand up to Montreal's cold weather, and worked continually through sub-zero temperatures to erect his mural within two winter months.

When commissioned to do a door for a large industrial company, situated outside Montreal, Roussil made a vertical design to break the building's horizontal line and worked it out in alternating strips of stained glass and oak.

"If he doesn't arrive in his lifetime, then he's doomed to terrific immortality," said Dr. Arthur Lismer, educational supervisor of the Montreal Museum and one of Canada's Group of Seven. "He's intellectually uncouth and completely pagan, but he has an inspired intelligence."

Roussil is a short, dark, powerfully built man, is vital, enthusiastic and optimistic. Working with architects, he strongly believes that he can give sculpture an honest place in society, where it can touch all people.

He has never forgotten that he was born in Montreal's East End, among the workers, who are denied the opportunity to know, understand and appreciate art.

As a boy, he lived with his three sisters and two brothers in rooms over his father's East End pastry shop. But it was in the street that he spent most of his time. There he learned to fight and how to draw.

Roussil didn't go far in school. His mother died when he was ten, and when his father became ill he took a job delivering groceries. He was only thirteen when war broke out, and five years later he enlisted in the Canadian infantry and went to Europe. At the end of the war Roussil returned to Montreal and found he had "no approach to anything."

"Sure, I had some talent as an artist," he said. "But talent means nothing without knowledge."

But Roussil found an opportunity to study art when Dr. Arthur Lismer organised a course at the Montreal Museum for veterans wishing to study art on their government credit.

The Museum's art centre is usually denied to the products of Montreal's East End, and Roussil, with typical honesty, admits he was "full of complexes" there. But he plunged into the study of drawing, painting, design and sculpture, and began to find himself.

Alfred Pinsky, an art teacher who studied at the centre, remembers the time Roussil decided to become a sculptor.

"He had been working with clay in the basement for some time," Pinsky recalled. "Suddenly, one day, he became terribly excited over the discovery that sculpture was his medium. Drawing was naturally too tame for a man of his physical strength. But with sculpture he had a medium in which he could express his whole body."

The stories of Roussil's physical prowess are legend in Montreal. "The little devil's like an ox," Dr. Lismer once said.

During Roussil's third year at the centre he met and married another art student, Madeleine Parsons, of a well-known English family, living in Montreal's West End.



Described by the owners, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Paradis of Montreal, as "a little Goddess in wood . . . a poem of life."

"We were always moving," Madeleine said, thinking back to their first year together. "We could never pay our rent."

But at the end of that year, in July, 1949, a small French library in the East End (Librairie Tranquille) opened its doors to the first exhibition of sculpture and drawings by Robert Roussil.

"All his work," wrote the French-language newspaper, *Le Canada*, "has a vigour and sincerity that express the personality of the artist."

Through this show Roussil met a writer, who told him of acres of trees he had on property outside Montreal. "You might find one you could use," he suggested. Roussil went and found the pine tree that inspired his 12 ft., 350 lb. Family Group.

He hacked and hewed at the two-pronged trunk for three months, and out of the coarseness of the pine fashioned the tall, tense, muscular figure of the man, towering over the

ROBERT ROUSSIL. CANADIAN SCULPTOR



"... a lovely study of a bird in motion."

fuller kneeling form of the mother and child.

The only problem was what to do with it.

Remembering the art centre had asked for a piece of his work, Roussil and his friends trucked it into Montreal. When they found the art centre closed for the night they deposited the totemic sculpture on the lawn.

Early the next morning it provided an unusual object of jesting for West End taxi drivers. As blinds went up, eyebrows were raised, and one horrified resident phoned the police. The Family Group went to jail in a police wagon and stayed there until Roussil found temporary lodgings for the piece outside Montreal.

Montreal newspapers jumped on the story. "The same publicity fell to Epstein," wrote French-Canada's *Le Revue Populaire*, "but it did not lessen the value of his gigantic and brutal Adam."

Time magazine offered Roussil veiled sympathy by pointing out that "Montreal has long kept a cautious eye on art in the raw. This time was no exception."

"In 1878," the magazine said, "after irate citizens had banished from exhibition a plaster cast of the Discobolus, famed Roman copy of a Myron statue, because the discus thrower was nude, novelist Samuel (*The Way of All Flesh*) Butler wrote a satirical ode to the city:

"Stowed away in a Montreal lumber room
The Discobolus standeth and turneth his face to the wall;
Dusty, cobweb-covered, maimed and set at naught,
Beauty crieth in an attic and no man regardeth.
O God! O Montreal!"

"That attitude won't solve anything," Roussil said. "I'm a part of backward Montreal."

Montrealers urged him to concentrate on small sculpture, but he was dead set against working exclusively for the living-room market.

"Art doesn't just belong to those who can afford it; art belongs to everyone. And I'm going to find the function of art in our society."

Roussil was also beginning to find his place in society. His political sympathies remained with the working-class people into which he was born.

"Politics," he said recently, "gives me the stimulation I need as a sculptor. It keeps my mind in struggle."

"The tree," Dr. Lismer once said, "is Roussil's victim."

The next tree to feel Roussil's axe was a poplar he found in woods near his modest five-room home in Verdun. He sawed an eight-foot chunk off the trunk and lugged it home in winter, by sled.

This time he made two figures, a man and woman, standing close, in an embrace. The woman's raised arm held an embryo, on which rested a dove. Roussil finished this sculpture in two months and called it "Peace."

The public first saw it on a busy down-town Montreal street corner in March, 1951.

Reporters became pollsters and printed long columns of reaction, officers of the city's juvenile delinquency squad dusted off a city by-law which forbids the display of nudes, and prepared to take action, but instead, one day at noon, a 33-year-old man stalked up to the statue, armed with a 4-ft. length of wood. The first blow knocked off the dove and the second brought down the embryo. When questioned the man said:

"I wanted to smash the whole thing, but it is too hard."

But Roussil fastened the three pieces together with long screws, concealed by wood plugs, and exhibited "Peace" at the museum's next spring show. This sculpture was one he took to Paris in the winter of 1953, when Raymond Creuze opened his gallery to a showing of Roussil's early totemic work. The monumental sculpture created such interest in Paris that it is intended to stage a large exhibition later.

Though Roussil has sculptured in every conceivable material, his largest experience has been in wood. To select wood, Roussil goes in search of a tree, cuts it down and then chops up the trunk into working lengths.

When the wood is sufficiently dry, he debarks a length in his backyard and then hauls it into the basement to feel the first heavy blows of the axe. This stage of sculpture he finds the most demanding.

"It takes determination to get into a piece of wood," he once said. "And it depends entirely upon how you go into it, what type of problem there will be to solve."

Roussil uses his axe for the entire job of sculpture and depends on his chisel for only delicate surface work.

Through last winter Roussil worked continually with wood, sometimes going directly into his material without first making sketches. The result was a large amount of abstract pieces, made "not to get away from reality," he explained, "but to have the experience of the wood."

Knowledge of his material is strikingly evident in the fluid lines of his latest pieces—simply constructed, finely balanced, light in volume and smoothly finished.

"Roussil has made many mistakes," Dr. Lismer has said. "But he has never made a mistake about his material."

ART AND ANTIQUE DEALERS GOLFING SOCIETY

The autumn meeting was held on Monday, September 12th, at Swinley Forest (Ascot) Golf Club. A picturesque course, with the fairways flanked by pine trees and heather, and with many interesting holes. It was founded by Lord Derby in 1911, and members of the Royal Family as well as many famous golfers have played over the course.

In the morning a Medal round was played for the George Harris Cup, which was won by Mr. C. J. Fleming, with an excellent score of sixty-seven nett; the runner-up was Mr. J. G. Beer with sixty-nine nett. In the afternoon members went out to compete against bogey in greensomes for the Alexander Lewis and De Pinna Cups. Mr. F. Brett and Mr. J. Blanchard came in as winners with the amazing score of eight up, the runners-up, Mr. J. G. Beer and Mr. F. G. Wray, following with seven.

Mr. Norman Adams, captain of the club for the past two years, presented the prizes and welcomed three new members, L. S. Brown, R. Swift and E. A. Symmons. Mr. Elmer Woollett was elected captain for the ensuing year.

This meeting, with the highest attendance (23) since the war, ended the activities of the club for 1955, and members return to their respective clubs to practise and prepare for battle at the next spring meeting, which will be held in April at another good course.

COLLECTING SHEFFIELD PLATE

BY W. H. HODKINSON

WHAT is amazing about the earlier patterns of the Early Georgian period of Sheffield Plate is that they bear such little resemblance to the Adam style patterns that immediately superseded them.

Valuable pieces of the Early Georgian period are the pierced and wire-work baskets in what has come to be called geometric design. These baskets are oval in shape, those of pierced design having a delicately decorated handle and a foot pierced with the same design. Those baskets made entirely of wire would have solid pieces down the sides to support the handle and a pierced stand to match the particular wire-work design.

The first silver plate bread basket was made by Paul Lamerie about 1730. This was of a wicker pattern, and it was this design that formed the basis of inspiration for the Sheffield platers, though they proceeded on rather different lines. The designs of later baskets show evidence of being influenced by the work of William Plummer and Edward Romer, both of whom earned repute as makers of silver baskets. It was the custom at first to match the bread basket with a fruit basket of the same pattern.

Perhaps it was inevitable that the Adam influence should affect Sheffield Plate. But even so, it was a revolutionary change. Classic forms and decoration erased all other forms for a time. Yet even so, the first decorative efforts on the Adam patterns were reminiscent of the Queen Anne style, with flattish fluting and drawn wire edges.

Grace and elegance are the characteristics of this style.

Handles became a more dominant feature of design. Indeed, it is quite legitimate to say that handles grew out of the articles. Though at first the accent of the Adam influence was on form, decoration soon became as important, classic in nature and treatment.

Decoration increased. Fluting went out of fashion, except as a subdued form of decoration.

Evidence of the change in style can be traced more readily in the candlestick than in any other article of Sheffield Plate manufacture. The most popular design had a four-sided stem, which tapered downwards, and an urn-shaped socket. The base became standard square-shape and deep. Base, stem and socket were all decorated.

Articles of the Adam period usually have one dominant note in their decoration. A favourite decorative effect was the use of swags of laurel leaves. The ram's head was also used to good effect.

As Adam-inspired pieces grew heavier the change over to the Empire period was inevitable. This change occurred at the beginning of the XIXth century. The period was only a short one, and its characteristics were heaviness of form and the use of Egyptian style ornamentation.

Sphinxes, lion head handles, dragon supports and claw feet were used for decorative effect. Winged mounts became the fashion and patterning was either of a wicker-work or formal leaf type. A new-style candelabrum appeared. This had three supports with claw feet in place of a stem. The

base consisted of three or more sides. At times the bases were hexagonal. The sockets were fluted, and the drip pans had gadroon edges. The Empire style of Sheffield Plate is perhaps the easiest to recognise. Certainly candelabra of this period have an individuality all their own.

The outcome of all this classicism, even the austere style of the Empire period, was a desire for change. This desire heralded the Late Georgian period, though there was nothing revolutionary about this change. In fact, it was in part a return to the earlier style of the Early Georgian period, with certain additions and variations.

Fluting regained its popularity, the large, bold flutes that shaped an article instead of giving mere decorative effect. There was less chasing and engraving, but greater use was made of piercing. A little later chasing regained something of its former popularity. It was employed to revive the outstanding flower designs so much in use during the earlier period.

Flower and shell designs were employed a great deal for decorative effect. In fact, flower design became such a craze that presently not only mounts and edges were so decorated, but also handles and feet, until eventually decoration became the most important feature of Sheffield Plate. Edges became broader. The vine leaf became a popular method of decoration.

Indeed, the value of Sheffield Plate of the Late period lies in its marvellous workmanship and the ingenuity of decorative effect. This period lasted till about the middle of the Victorian Era, when the development of electroplating put an end to Sheffield Plate manufacture.

It had now become the custom in the production of Sheffield Plate, as indeed it is to-day in the

silversmith industry, for several workmen to co-operate on one article. This specialisation by the man with an aptitude for chasing, or soldering, gave the craftsman more scope.

Manufacturers helped each other, too. It was the rule to loan dies and other tools to one another, so that identical articles would appear under two different names.

In this way, whilst Sheffield Plate pieces lost something of their individuality, they gained in perfection and finish.

Candlesticks and candelabra of the Late period lost all trace of the classic style. Bases were usually round, and even when the base was square it would frequently be used to contrast the rest of the work. Often it was a sort of false base used to give strength to the round fluted part it supported. Candelabra arms were sometimes lavishly ornamented with floral scroll work. The high standing base of the Adam period completely disappeared. Drip pans, which had diminished in size about the beginning of the XIXth century, again became prominent. Sockets lost their urn shape and took on more freedom of form. Sheffield Plate manufacture was going out in a blaze of glory.

Perhaps there is no greater tribute to Sheffield Plate craftsmen than that silver plate articles are sold to-day under the title "Reproduction Sheffield Plate."



Composite picture of Sheffield Plate pieces, including beautiful Adam Urn (top centre illustration) and delicately proportioned Epergne figure (centre illustration).

With acknowledgement to Sheffield City Museum.

THE ILLUMINATED MINIATURES OF MOHAMMED RACIM

BY RAYMOND LISTER



Presentation



Duel between Arab Horsemen

MOHAMMED RACIM, an oriental miniaturist whose work has become well known in many parts of Europe, was born in Algiers in 1896, the son of a decorative craftsman, Ali Racim.

It was in his father's workshop that he first came into contact with oriental painting, and so he was ingrained from the first with the traditions of his country's art. He showed promise at an early age and was sent to study in the National School of Art, Algiers, and, soon after, at Algiers University. Later, on the proceeds of a commission to illustrate an edition of the Life of Mohamet, he went to Paris, where he made a wide study of the examples of both European and oriental art. Later still, an official grant enabled him to travel in Spain, where he studied Hispano-mauresque painting. From that time he was able to work and develop his own style of miniature painting. In 1933 Racim was appointed a drawing teacher in the National Art School, where his real career began.

Mohammed Racim's miniatures are really illuminations, whether they are painted expressly for decorating a book or for framing. The illuminated miniature, if it is to fulfil its function properly, must fully observe certain conditions. In the first place it should be decorative, because, as its qualifying adjective implies, it is to "light up"—to embellish. It should be intimate for it is usually intended to be enclosed in a book, and must, therefore, stand close inspection. Most important of all, if writing is used, as it usually will be in such work, the design and writing should be interwoven in such a way that the one does not detract from the other. This means that the design must be calligraphic, for any attempt at elaborate modelling, chiaroscuro, or other aids to *trompe-l'oeil* realism would inevitably give the text an appearance of unreality and intrusion.

Mohammed Racim tactfully observes these conditions. From a decorative point of view his miniatures certainly fulfil what is asked of them and leave nothing to be desired; his "Presentation" is a remarkable example of this. The formalised conception has the breath of intimacy upon it. One has only to contrast the face of the central figure, regal and dignified, with the curiosity of the child in the arms of the woman on the right, to see the measure of his success in achieving this.

The traditions of oriental miniature painting are here, too, in the complicated and closely welded design, in the loving care for detail in its every part, in the formal perspective, and not least in its delicately painted, cloisonné-like border.

That the illuminated miniature, in spite of its decorative functions, need not be devoid of action, is well illustrated in "Duel between Arab Horsemen." As befits the subject, this work shows a greater measure of realism than the previous one, and the background is not painted with the same delicacy—how indeed could it be? The atmosphere of a duel of this kind, between angered Arabs with flashing swords, needs a different treatment from a scene within the quiet and ritualistic atmosphere of a harem. Yet here again Mohammed Racim rises to the decorative demands of his task, and with the painting of the conflicting horsemen combines dynamic feeling with decorative draughtsmanship. As in the "Presentation" miniature, a complicated border completes the picture.

An interesting contrast may be made between "Galley" and "Naval Battle," the former a marine subject seen in terms of pure decoration, the latter a similar subject painted with a far greater degree of realism, although in this, as in all of his work, Mohammed Racim has shown his aversion, as a true miniaturist, to the use of excessive shadow, which would detract from the brilliance upon which the miniature depends so much for its effect. In spite of the fact that he so definitely eschews *chiaroscuro*, the artist has managed in this battle-scene to convey a suggestion of drama, and, moreover, has filled the space of the miniature with an amazingly detailed mass of human activity without detracting in any way from the general decorative scheme. "Galley" achieves its effect through greater formalisation, but that effect is just as marked in the other miniature. This, too, is a good example of the artist's ability to weld together the decoration and the text. Two panels of writing at the top and the bottom of the border are bound up with the rest of the design in a tasteful way, and although it is difficult for those of us with no Arabic to appreciate how far this really succeeds, we can but applaud the combination from a purely visual point of view.

In a good deal of his work Mohammed Racim leans rather more towards the purely oriental strains of his art, but here, too, he shows an originality that prevents it from being a mere repetition of what has been done before, thus proving that the resources of painting founded on a sound sense of tradition are by no means exhausted.

Apart from his miniatures, Racim does some notable work in realist portraiture, the style of which is derived completely from European sources.

Correspondence

A POSSET POT OF CHAMPION'S HARD PASTE PORCELAIN

POSSET pots, usually of delftware, less frequently made of slip-decorated earthenware, are always objects of interest, but here is one of Bristol hard-paste porcelain in the collection of Mr. Ernest Allman. In porcelain, they are practically unknown, chiefly because by the time porcelain had come into general use in this country, the posset pot had been replaced by the punch bowl. Few, if any, are likely to have been made after 1750. Enquiry among the various authorities has failed to elicit any information of the whereabouts of any other known example and this specimen is probably unique.



Beyond the fact that it seems to have been made to a special order of the Rathbone family, nothing is known of its history. Typical in potting and decoration in every way, it is marked with the numeral 2 in gold without any other addition, and it is of some interest to note the comparative rarity of this mark and the circumstances in which it is found. The authority on this matter is the Rev. Dr. Oxford, quoted by Frank Hurlbutt and who wrote the preface to the Catalogue of the Trapnell Collection. He tells us that, of 1,500 pieces of Champion's porcelain which he examined, 1,091 were marked in some way, but that only 48 were marked with a numeral alone, usually in gold. "It is very rare to find a number only, not in gold." He further states that when the number is in gold, the pieces form parts of services, generally *déjeuner* services, some pieces of which are marked with the crossed swords. The number "one" occurs on no fewer than twenty of the forty-eight pieces examined, but the number "two" on one only. That is to say, the learned doctor found it but once in his survey of 1,500 pieces.

KNOWLES BONEY

SILVER PIPE

This is to thank you for your kindness in publishing my inquiry about a silver pipe, in your July number, and I should like you to convey my thanks to "Eclectic" for his remarks published in your August issue.

I can assure you that others are equally puzzled about the origin and age of my silver pipe. It seems the melting pot has swallowed up some vital evidence (perhaps to make snuff boxes?).

I suppose it is too much to hope that the latest innovation of search among submerged wrecks, etc., may one day bring to light a fellow pipe from the same silversmith and give date and origin?

PERCY W. HUNT.

FRANCIS TIMSON I'ONS

I am engaged in preparing a publication on the life and work of the artist Francis Timson I'Ons (1802-87), of Grahams-town, South Africa.

He is known to have executed many commissions for British

military men stationed in the Eastern Province, and as it is proposed to include a catalogue of his work extant to-day, I shall be grateful if any of your readers who know of the present whereabouts of any of his pictures will communicate with me.

It is hoped to make the catalogue as complete as possible and to obtain all the available information about the man and his work.

MRS. EDNA BRADLOW.

P.O. Box 341, Cape Town,
South Africa.

PEBBLE PAINTING

Readers of APOLLO may be interested in an exquisite picture which has recently come into my possession. This picture, "The Head of Christ," was the property of Lady Abbot, wife of George Abbot, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1611 to 1633, and was left to the ancestors of Colonel Adamson of York Lodge, Regent's Park, by whose orders it was, with other goods, sold and purchased by Walter Emden, December 1908.

The picture is painted on a pebble plaque, framed in ebonised wood mounted in silver with jewelled corners. The face is singularly majestic, though most attractively kind, and though the thorn crown is worn and blood-stains appear, suffering seems forgotten in the mind of Christ as He glances out to the beholder who may be in need of His help. The painting, though not a miniature, is of equal fineness and perfection. Immediately behind the head is a natural halo of pale sapphire quartz, and this is surrounded by pink, white and dove-grey streaks—strata. The whole pebble measures 6 x 5½ in., the face 4 x 2½ in. At the Emden sale, St. Margarets-atte-Cliffe, this picture was bought by Mrs. George Arliss, and was given to my mother. No photograph does it justice.



Pebble painting; its ebony frame is described in the text.

CONSTANCE GREYSTAN

IMPORTANT PICTURES GIVEN TO BIRMINGHAM

The late Mr. Ernest E. Cook, of the firm Thos. Cook and Son, bequeathed his famous collection of works of art to the National Art-Collections Fund, to be given to museums and art galleries in England, at the discretion of the committee, who have selected the following works for presentation to the Birmingham Art Gallery: "A Landscape near Rome, with a view of the Ponte Molle, figures and cattle in the foreground," by Claude Lorrain (1600-1682). The picture is signed and dated 1648 and was, for many years, in the Ashburnham Collection, which was sold in 1953, when the picture, now presented to Birmingham, was bought by Mr. Cook for £13,000, the biggest price ever paid for a Claude at auction. The acquisition of this picture marks a high-water mark in the history of the Birmingham collection, since it is of the highest quality and by one of the greatest masters of landscape painting.

"Girl with a Bird in her Hand," by G. Crespi (1665-1747). This is a charming picture of fine quality, by a distinguished Italian painter whose work has not before been represented in the permanent collection. Other examples of his work are to be seen in the current exhibition of Italian Art in the Art Gallery.

"The Music Lesson," by J. Ochterveldt (1634/5-1708/9). This artist specialised in domestic subjects of this kind and his skill in painting satin and other materials is well shown in this tranquil scene. The pictures are on view in Gallery XI.

In addition to the pictures, the museum has acquired from Mr. Cook's collection a number of pieces of furniture, some of which will shortly be displayed at Aston Hall. This bequest is especially timely, as it follows the recent gifts by Birmingham business firms which have enabled the authorities to further their policy of furnishing Aston Hall in a suitable manner.

BOOK REVIEWS

FURNITURE-MAKING IN THE XVIIITH AND XVIIIITH CENTURY. By R. W. SYMONDS. Connoisseur. £8 8s.

Among the number of art historians who have chosen English furniture as their subject three in this century have been outstanding—the late Miss Margaret Jourdain, Mr. Ralph Edwards and Mr. R. W. Symonds. Had Mr. Symonds contributed no more than his first work, *The Present State of Old English Furniture*, he could claim to have brought about an important change in furniture collecting. It was this book, published thirty-three years ago, which first aroused appreciation for what he called the surface condition of old wood and brought into being the present discriminating demand for furniture with patina. Before this, the *cognoscenti* were well enough pleased if their furniture was genuine and of good quality. Patina was so little considered that even pieces found with original surface condition would as likely as not be sent off to the french polisher, whose brutal technique includes scraping the wood bare in order to obtain a receptive surface for his final coat of shellac. To-day, largely thanks to Mr. Symonds, a french-polished piece of furniture is held to be a lost example—in fact, all that can be done is to strip it once more, wax it and simply leave time, certainly the space of a generation or so, to build up new patination. An even more substantial claim which this author could make is that by his tireless research into ancient documents and by his keen observation he has extended our general knowledge a very long way. In his newly published book he maintains his customary high standard, telling us no more than necessary of what we have already had opportunity to know. His purpose is to break new ground.

The opening chapter, "Furniture Collectors from Horace Walpole to Percival Griffiths," is a fascinating summary of the collecting moods of two centuries. Rum-maging through antique shops began earlier than we knew—Mr. Symonds' first record "Paid for dear wife at curiosity shop £0 10. 0." coming from a diary of 1690. The first serious collectors of old English furniture, however, were XIXth-century antiquaries, and the story of the two friends who built themselves "a modern antique house" in the 1830's at Fulham (can it be the building now used

by the Fulham Gas Company?) in order to fill it with old furniture was the beginning of a movement which gathered strength throughout Victorian days and is still doing so. Although the antique furniture trade has now reached gigantic proportions it is a curious anomaly that there are, in fact, far fewer "collectors" than there were forty or so years ago. The majority no longer buy old furniture because they are primarily interested in its history; it is chiefly because it is in high fashion and because it offers an attractive investment.

The following is a quotation Mr. Symonds has found in a trade journal. "Within the last few years another change has taken place, and walnut furniture has again become fashionable. Fine old specimens . . . that had been quietly resting in the lumber rooms of our large mansions have been . . . reinstated in their former places, or sold at prices that would have astonished their long-departed makers." This was not written in the early 1920's, as I should have believed, but in 1853.

In another chapter dealing with the craftsman, Mr. Symonds' assertion, made "without fear of contradiction," that English XVIIIth-century chairs are the most graceful in the world, might well arouse a storm of contradiction from across the Channel. But whilst I personally should not care to take on the task of championing a Chippendale ribbonback against a Louis XV bergère, I should at least feel at one with Mr. Symonds when dealing with the last thirty years of the century. I, too, believe that at that time, even allowing for the Jacob brothers, English chairs were superior.

RICHARD TIMEWELL.

"GOOD SIR TOBY". By DESMOND EYLES. Doulton & Co., Ltd. 30s.

The sub-title of this book is *The Story of Toby Jugs and Character Jugs through the Ages*, and it is directed to a growing circle of collectors. Two-thirds of the volume deals with Tobies and their fore-runners up to the XIXth century. From there, the reader is led forward to the modern series of jugs based on popular fictional and real-life characters made to-day by the long-established firm of Doulton.

The writer summarises the numerous types of old Toby Jugs, and describes and illustrates most of them; the modern jugs are treated in similar fashion. Generously and well-illustrated in both colour

and monochrome, the book covers the subject from ancient times onwards.

In a volume of this type, perfection of detail is not to be expected, and it will not appeal greatly to the serious collector of antiques, but the many who own one or more of Doulton's admirable jugs will be interested to learn of their worthy lineage through the medium of this informative book.

GEOFFREY WILLS.

THE VAN EYCK PROBLEM. By MAURICE W. BROCKWELL. Chatto & Windus. 10s. 6d.

Mr. Brockwell is one of the best known of English writers on art history. *The van Eycks and their Art*, his revision in collaboration with Weale of Weale's *Hubert and John van Eyck*, is still a standard work; his catalogues of several important collections are of constant use to students. It is all the more distressing that he should recently have taken to defending doubtful theories with poor arguments. Though I should be glad of space to praise some of Mr. Brockwell's past work, I cannot write in favour of his latest book.

"The van Eyck problem" is this: was there an important painter Hubert van Eyck as well as the important painter Jan van Eyck? Mr. Brockwell thinks not. His desultory exposition culminates in a quotation from *L'Agneau Mystique au Laboratoire*; there MM. Coremans, Looze and Thissen, in a valuable intercalation which I interpret and am not quoting, say that they had exceptional opportunities for studying the Ghent altarpiece, but were unable to distinguish two hands in it.

Mr. Brockwell comments that the illusions of centuries were thus in a single sentence dispelled—clearly, Hubert van Eyck had never lived. The logic of this escapes me, but I hope that Mr. Brockwell agrees with me in esteeming very highly MM. Coremans, Looze and Thissen.

The status of Hubert van Eyck is in my view a difficult problem; I could not discover that Mr. Brockwell has made any contribution to its solution. Nor can I recommend the book as an introduction to the problem for the general reader; it is too partial. Further research may strongly suggest, may conceivably prove, that an important painter Hubert van Eyck never existed; Mr. Brockwell thinks that the debunking of Hubert has been accomplished already. His sincerity is patent, and worthy of respect; but I do not agree that Hubert has been squashed, and I doubt that he ever will be.

MARTIN DAVIS

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PORTUGAL AND MADEIRA. By SACHEVERELL SITWELL. B. T. Batsford, Ltd. 18s.

In a description of the Tower of Belém, near Lisbon, Mr. Sacheverell Sitwell states that the entire building is tied in, tautened, as it were, by a stone cable tied in sailors' knots. In the same way, he makes a binding force for his book on Portugal and Madeira from the fact that the Portuguese have always been a seafaring people. It is a strong, recurrent theme, with the sound of the Atlantic in it—of the sea that bore those early explorers and navigators from the Tagus to Africa and India and back again. Examining the construction, the stone embellishments of a Portuguese church or palace, Mr. Sitwell detects something wilder and more exuberant, more Indian in poetical imagery than any of the fantasies found

among more stay-at-home nations: it is an echo of other buildings in Brazil or other far-away Portuguese possessions.

In his reaction to things strange and beautiful, and all they suggest, Mr. Sitwell links us with the civilisation and art of many lands. He calls first at Madeira, and sees it as Venice set down in the parrot waters of the tropics. His descriptions of the flowers of Madeira are exquisite, exotic, fantastic, fierce.

He stresses the dissimilarity between Portugal and Spain. Portugal escapes the tragedy and sombre magnificence of Spain. It is pastoral and Arcadian. The bullfights are chivalrous affairs of superb horsemanship; there is no death in them. The architecture is extraordinary, and it is to this that most of the book is devoted. He has made five journeys to Portugal, so that in addition to the more famous buildings we are able to visit with him small and

neglected corners of the country where churches exist that are scarcely heard of. The exuberance of the Maneolo style of decoration is inexhaustible—there is no end to the startling forms and convolutions inspired by its fancies. In contrast, the restraint, the calm of a classically constructed building is "like an aria of Mozart incomparably sung in the midst of a lot of local music". There are amusing passages on various uglinesses, such as Estoril and its geraniums like a full brass band. And there is art in the closing of each chapter—that we put the book down each time and realise that here, for delicate allusiveness continually enlarging upon itself, we have fallen upon a possession of permanent virtuosity. The seventy photographs are numbered for easy reference in the text, and there is a helpful historical note at the end.

MARY SEATON

SALE ROOM NOTES AND PRICES

BY BRICOLEUR

OBJECTS OF ART

At Christie's a school of Nottingham alabaster plaque from the late XIVth century sold for 240 gns. It measured 21½ in. high by 10½ in. wide, and was carved in high relief with Christ's Resurrection from the Sepulchre, partly decorated in gold and colours. French examples included an alabaster relief carved with four saints in adoration, 22 in. high by 9½ in. wide, which brought 68 gns. It was dated late XIVth century and had been at Saltwood Castle. A cream stone head of a crusader from Chartres, XIIth century, was sold for 90 gns. This piece still showed traces of the polychrome decoration and was mounted on a veined mottled grey marble pedestal, 8 in. wide. Another French XIIth-century piece, which brought 105 gns., was a fragment of a stone capital with the figure of a bearded prophet.

It measured 17 in. high and had previously been in the Brandenburg and Frank DeVoe collections. An example of wood carving, a carved oak figure of a lady, seated in a chair, holding a book and letter, sold for 125 gns. This piece, either French or Flemish, XVIth century, shows traces of the colour decoration.

Sotheby's made £800 for a fine French ivory diptych from the second quarter of the XIVth century. The left panel depicts the Birth of Christ, in the distance the Annunciation to the Shepherds, the right wing with the Last Judgment; in the tri-lobed arch at the base is the Resurrection of the Dead. Overall size 7½ in. by 5 in. This diptych is the work of the atelier described by M. Koechlin as "L'Atelier aux Visages Caracterises," which is described by him in his work, *Les Ivoires Gothiques Français*, No. 776.

At Rogers, Chapman and Thomas, a pair of 14-in mosaic panels of Italian architectural scenes, and a circular panel, brought £33.

CLOCKS

Christie's sold a Thomas Tompion bracket clock for 850 gns. This example was numbered 38, and had a 6-in. square dial containing calendar aperture, the movement with pull repeater, but the escapement altered. 80 gns. was paid for a French astronomical clock with white circular dial, subsidiary dial and second hand, surmounted by a mechanical orrery, 21 in. high, on a walnut pedestal stand, 43 in. high, early XIXth century.

Clocks sold at Sotheby's recently included an important long-case clock by John Fromanteel, the 9-in. square dial with silver hour and second rings, calendar aperture, two winding holes, the movement with bolt and shutter maintaining power, contained in an ebonised case of architectural form. A well-known clock which brought £650 was an early bracket timepiece by Ahasuerus Fromanteel, with 8½ in. square gilt-metal dial and silver chapter ring, the movement with crown escapement and bob pendulum, contained in an architectural ebonised case, 23 in. high. This clock, c. 1658, is illustrated by Cescinsky and Webster, pl. 274, and described by them as "the earliest pendulum timepiece introduced into England." £700 was paid for a rare and early bracket clock by Edward East, which was contained in an architectural ebonised case with key drawer, the dial with calendar aperture and the movement with crown escapement, bob pendulum and outside locking plate, 23½ in. high. Very similar to the clock by Edward East, c. 1675, which Cescinsky illustrates in *Old English Clockmakers*, Fig. 182.

At Phillips, Son and Neale an Empire chased ormolu and white marble Garniture de Cheminée, comprising a clock and a pair of two-light candelabra, brought £70. The clock had drum-shaped movement between two pillars, and the candelabra was supported by grotesque human animals.

CARPETS

Christie's sold a large Kirman carpet, measuring 22 ft. 6 in. by 14 ft. 10 in., for 760 gns. It was decorated with an all-over design of floral palmettes and flower sprays on a red ground, the border with medallions and strapwork on red and yellow. An English hand-tufted carpet brought 250 gns. It measured 19 ft. 8 in. by 13 ft. 10 in., and was designed with a scrolling foliage on a red ground within a border on a buff ground. Two interesting gros-point needlework carpets brought 36 gns. and 145 gns. The first measured 10 ft. 6 in. by 6 ft. 6 in., and the second 12 ft. 9 in. by 12 ft. These are designed after the furnishings of the Neo-Gothic cathedral at Algiers, originally dedicated by St. Louis, King of France, who joined the

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SALE ROOM NOTES AND PRICES

7th and 8th Crusades, and now known as Notre Dame d'Afrique. The first has the initials of the subscribers to the building fund of the cathedral and the second the motto of the first crusaders. An Aubusson tapestry carpet, 13 ft. 4 in. by 9 ft. 7 in., woven with flowers and foliage in colours on buff and pink ground, brought 135 gns. Two Chinese carpets, which always sell well, brought 135 gns. and 130 gns. The first had a gold field with powder blue border and woven with flowering branches in the corners, 13 ft. 6 in. by 8 ft. 7 in. The other was of light green colour embossed with scrolls and foliage, 12 ft. 8 in. by 9 ft. 10 in.

At Sotheby's a Kula silk prayer rug, measuring 6 ft. 3 in. by 4 ft. 6 in., brought £130. This had a chestnut-brown mihrab and stone-coloured spandrels, within a bluish green border. In the same sale was an Aubusson carpet of pastel colouring, which brought £160. It measured 13 ft. 4 in. by 9 ft. 7 in.

Carpets sold at Rogers, Chapman and Thomas recently have included an Agra carpet, 19 ft. 3 in. by 12 ft., which brought £75. It was patterned in gold, ivory and pale blue on a wine ground. An Oriental rug in tones of beige, red and blue, and measuring 7 ft. by 4 ft. 3 in., brought £58, and a Persian runner £42. This measured 10 ft. 6 in. by 5 ft. 2 in., in typical colours of red, blue, ivory and brown.

Sixty-one pounds was paid for a Turkey carpet which measured 16 ft. by 13 ft. and patterned in blue and green on a red ground.

Persian carpets at Phillips, Son and Neale have included one which brought £260. This measured 14 ft. 4 in. and had a small design in red and green on a beige field within a striped border. Another, almost the same size, 14 ft. 2 in. by 11 ft. 3 in., having an all-over design on a green field and stripe border, brought £180. An old Kashan rug measuring 6 ft. 7 in. by 4 ft. 3 in., sold for £78; it had a formal floral figuring and a dark blue border similarly patterned.

SILVER

At Christie's a Henry VIII silver-gilt hourglass salt sold for £3,500. It measured 6½ in. high and weighed 16 oz. 3 dwt. Of hexafoil outline with circular saltwell, and the knob has pierced Gothic tracery and miniature buttresses. The maker's mark, a crescent enclosing mullet, is apparently the same as that on the cup and cover of 1520 at Christ's College, Cambridge, although Jackson shows that as in a nearly oblong shield and the present example has a shield of usual "flat-iron" form. The date letter is indistinct and has been previously ascribed to 1505, but comparison with other recorded examples of 1516 shows it is for that year. This rare salt is close in form and decoration to the pair at Christ's College, Cambridge. A Charles II large cylindrical tankard and cover brought £640. The body was chased with Chinese figures and the flat cover with an archer aiming at a bird, corkscrew thumbpiece and scroll handle. This piece was 8½ in. high and weighed 37 oz. 3 dwt.; maker's mark EG between mullets, 1683. A George II two-handled cup and cover by Paul de Lamerie, 1728, brought £750. The circular foot chased with a band of shells, strapwork and foliage, the lower part of the body with applied strapwork and portrait medallions, a moulded rib above engraved with the arms of Reade of Woods Park, Co. Galway, impaling an unidentified coat, probably Vaughan. The handles of S-scroll form and the domed cover similarly decorated; 12 in. high, Britannia standard, 95 oz. 13 dwt. Another George II two-handled cup and cover brought £680. This was by John Le Sage, 1732, 12½ in. high,

and weighed 94 oz. 2 dwt. The body was also decorated with applied strapwork below a moulded rib and with domed cover. The arms of those of Connolly impaling Wentworth for the Rt. Hon. William Connolly of Castletown, Co. Kildare, and Stratton Hall, Staffs, who married in 1733 Lady Anne Wentworth, daughter of Thomas, 1st Earl of Stafford (of the second creation). This piece came from the collection of Edward Steinkopff, Esq., 1935.

Silver sold at Sotheby's recently has included a Charles II salver on trumpet-shaped foot, engraved in the centre with the arms of Fettiplace and the wide border embossed and chased with acanthus foliage and punched tendril motifs, 14½ in. diam., marked on the salver and on the foot with maker's mark DG and two fleurs-de-llys in lozenge, 1677, 29 oz. 14 dwt. This piece sold for £360. A slightly later piece, a William and Mary tankard, 1691, brought £340. This had a plain tapered cylindrical body, with bold scroll handle and cup-shaped cover, 7½ in. high, fully marked, maker's mark I.C. over a star, 1691; 45 oz. 2 dwt.

Phillips, Son and Neale have sold four George II candlesticks on four-shell bases for £105, 73 oz. 10 dwt., and a Charles II oblong pin-cushion with moulded rim, on four scrolled feet, for £68. London, apparently 1676, 8 oz. 6 dwt. Foreign silver sold by this firm has included an antique Norwegian teapot of shaped oval form embossed with shells and scrolls, on three mask feet, Bergen, 13 oz. 4dwt., which brought £110.

COUNTRY SALES

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE. At a sale in their rooms recently, Messrs. Anderson and Garland made £300 for a painting on wood panel by Jan Mieris, 1660-90. The subject was an interior scene with two cavaliers and two women seated at a table, 17½ in. by 13½ in.

DUBLIN. Messrs. James Adam and Son held a sale by direction of Miss O'Grady at 49 Fitzwilliam Square. Prices in Dublin for fine period pieces has increased, and at this sale a Louis XV kingwood table, inlaid with various woods and mounted with ormolu, brought 720 gns. Other furniture included a French marquetry secretaire in kingwood, 300 gns., and a French cabinet in kingwood and amboyna wood, mounted in ormolu, 130 gns. Furniture by Hicks of Dublin included a pair of semi-elliptical tables in satinwood inlaid with flowers, 210 gns., and a set of six dining-chairs in Chippendale style, 160 gns. A Chippendale style wall mirror in a finely carved gilt frame, 230 gns. The pictures included a XVIIth-century Dutch flowerpiece, on panel, 260 gns.; a portrait in a landscape after Nicholas Maes, 55 gns. Porcelain included a Bristol figure of Diana, 42 gns., and a part famille-rose dinner service of 35 pieces, 78 gns.

ASHOVER, DERBYSHIRE. Messrs. Henry Spencer and Sons of Retford held a sale for Mr. C. F. Lamb at Amber House, Ashover, which was well attended. The principal prices realised were £68 for a George III silver tea service and £40 for a pair of George II silver salvers. The furniture included a walnut card-table, which brought £22, and a rosewood card-table, £31. An oak corner-cupboard sold for £35.

LEWES. There was a large attendance at the sale Messrs. Rowland Gorrington held at their Auction Rooms at Lewes. Items included in the sale were a Sparta carpet, £90, an Indian carpet £64; and in the furniture section a secretaire chest, £48, and a walnut commode, £55.

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